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A "QUIET" CHILD.

BY JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

"Come, Harry, put away your toys,
And take a book, or slate, instead:
I'm quite distracted with your noise,"
The worn and weary mother said.
"Boys are so troublesome and wild,
They keep the house in such a whirl,
I very often wish, my child,
You were a quiet little girl.

"Such comfort as I then might take
With your more gentle, sober ways;
What baby-houses we would make,
Such as I had in my young days.
We'd take a soap-box, nice and clean,
Saw out the windows and the doors,
Partitions put the rooms between,
And lay nice carpets on the floors.

"And when our property increased,
(For at the toy-stores we would shop,)
We built a larger house—at least—
We put another box on top.
And oh, the tiny baby-clothes!
And, oh, the cunning steps and shelves!
They pleased us greatly—I suppose
Because we made them all ourselves.

"But these are tame and foolish things;
'*Just fit for girls!*' so say the boys,
Who stuff their pockets full of strings,
And only live to make a noise.
Why, I have heard my father say,
That often, when a man, he went
Out in the woods, a mile away,
And shouted to his heart's content.

"O! Harry, dear, do have a care;
You restless monkey! 'tis no use
For me to speak. Now he's a bear!
A whole menagerie let loose!
Boys are a mystery to me,
And one, I fear, will drive me wild.
Oh, what a comfort he might be,
If he were not a noisy child!"

The days passed on; and shadows fell
O'er many a threshold once so bright,
The chiming of a funeral knell,
Brought darkness deeper than the night.
And she who once made grievous moan,
To boyish sports unreconciled,
Has laid beneath the churchyard-stone,
In death's embrace, her "quiet" child.

There is no racket on the stair,
No sound of any boisterous plays;
The house is still—he is not there,
Who with his sunshine filled the days,
The little bed is like a grave,
Reminding her of loss and pain;
Alas! she'd give the world to have
Her noisy darling back again.

NINON D'ARTOIS;

OR, THE

Shadow of the Guillotine.

A STORY OF THE REIGN OF TERROR.

By SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

CHAPTER V.

THE UNLOCKING OF A DARK SECRET.

The marquis heard approaching footsteps, and with one final effort he put back the terrible perturbation, and was much like himself when Ninon entered. She did not fly to him, as she might have done, if no cloud had come to dim the glorious sunbeam of the new arrival, but her face was joyous, notwithstanding, and she threw her arms around her father's neck, and kissed him upon the cheek.

"Papa, he has come—our Louis. O, are you not glad?"

For a single instant it was as though a knife had been plunged into the man's body. He could not mistake the joy-beams upon his daughter's face, nor the warm, soft tremor of her voice. As though it had been written in characters of living light before him, he read the story of her love. But he was used to efforts of self-control, and he very quickly advanced, and greeted the count with a smile, and with words of heartfelt welcome.

"My dear boy! Ah!"—holding the count's hand, and looking into the manly, healthily-embrowned face—"you will be my boy no more. Bless me! how the years have flown. You left me a fair-faced youth, more fit for the salon than for the field, and you return to me a grand-looking man, inured to toil, and danger, and hardship. Louis, I bid you welcome, now for all time—a thousand times, if you please."

Her father's greeting gave Ninon much comfort. Surely, Gideon de Bar could not have left him with any painful load upon his mind, or he would have shown something of it.

Ah! little did she think of the truth—of the fact of the human constitution—that those calamities which come nearest to making death a welcome guest are the ones which can be most surely put entirely out of sight. They are so terrible that they admit of no particle of thought without the presence of the whole great horror; so, from mere force of necessity, the whole is crushed under foot and out of sight. Had it been a lesser evil—had Gideon de Bar left the marquis with some simple matter of perplexing business on his mind—some tangle of the law that was calculated to fret and chafe him, he might not have hidden it so easily. As it was, however, as soon as the ice was broken, Philip d'Artois was all smiles and good-humor, the sharp pangs that ever and anon touched him to the heart not being allowed to appear upon the surface.

Louis told the story of his adventures in America, and he could tell them very briefly. He had gone to that country, upon the urgent recommendation of the Marquis de La Fayette, to complete his education at Princeton College, in New Jersey. That college had been especially recommended by Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and Henry Lee, and he had found it all he had been led to expect. Concerning the call that had brought him home, it had not come entirely unexpectedly. Said he:

"I had been thinking very strongly of coming when I received La Fayette's letter. I felt that every true Frenchman should be at his post of duty. Yet," he went on, with a change of tone to grave sadness, "now that I am here, the path of duty is not so plain. I find my paternal estate in ruins, the grand old chateau of twenty generations of Liancourts a pile of charred and blackened debris. And who have done it? The men who rule France to-day. The Assembly is the seat of power, and the Jacobin club rules the Assembly. Is it not so, my lord?"

"It is, Louis; and more, too; but we will talk of that by and by. I want you now to tell me of those good men on the other side of the ocean whom I have learned to love and revere. Tell me of Doctor Benjamin Rush. You made his acquaintance?"

"Most assuredly, and prized it highly."

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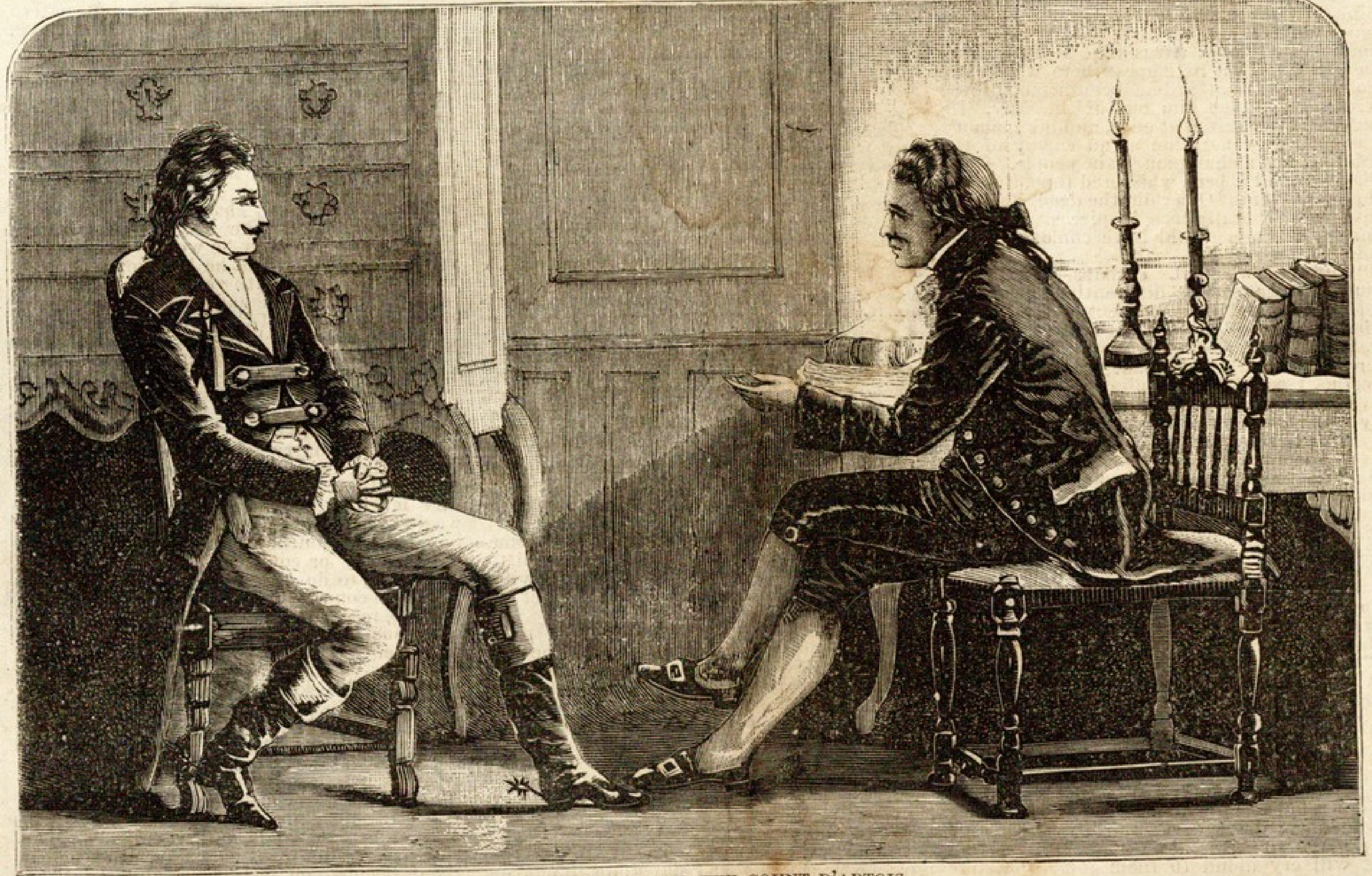

GIDEON DE BAR AND THE COUNT D'ARTOIS.

And Louis went on and told of his friends in America, until they were summoned to the banquet-room. The meal passed pleasantly, the marquis exerting himself to the utmost, and at its conclusion, Sir Philip laid his hand upon his daughter's head, and said, with a pleasant smile:

"My blessing, you must let me have Louis a little while to myself. There are some matters of business—of politics, and of the army—that we must discuss in private. You will not be jealous?"

"Just the opposite, papa. I think you ought to talk with Louis. You ought to— But you know better than I do. I shall speak to him good-night before he retires?"

"Really, my child, I do not know. But you shall, if you are up when we come out, though you must not wait for us. I think, on the whole, that you had better leave the count till morning. He will be rested then."

Ninon took it all in good part, but she watched her opportunity, and had a grandly-occupied spell of whispering with her lover before the library door had been shut and bolted between them.

Aye—shut and bolted; for no sooner had the marquis pointed Sir Louis to a seat than he returned to the door by which they had entered and slipped the bolt, and then secured another door communicating with a retiring-room, after which he was careful to draw the curtains over the Gothic windows. When he finally came to his seat—a great easy-chair by the side of the table on which candles were burning—the smile had faded from his face, and it was plain to be seen that he was the victim of a deeply-fixed terror.

"Be not surprised, my dear Louis, at these precautions. We have much to talk about this evening that must not be heard by other ears. I know not yet how much, or how little, I may have to communicate. There have been times when I have felt that if I could not find a sympathizing spirit to which I could pour out the burden of my bursting bosom, I should die. O, Louis, these are dark days! and they come upon me a thousand times more darkly than they come upon others. In the time long gone by there was— But never mind that now. Tell me what you have seen and heard since you crossed the channel. I saw that there was something upon your mind which you cared not to speak in Ninon's presence. Was I not right?"

"Yes," said the count.

And thereupon he went on to tell the story of his adventure in the gravel-pit of the wood. He had landed at Calais on the morning of the previous day, and was making the best of his way to St. Jean, when he fell upon the assassins, and when every principle of chivalry and right, as well as of humanity, demanded that he should draw his sword in defence of the weak and the honest against the stronger villains and cutthroats.

The marquis listened attentively, and strove hard to gain such knowledge of the parties engaged as might enable him to recognize them. Of the two travellers he could make nothing. Evidently, he said, the smaller man, in olive green, was a Jacobin spy; but he could form no opinion of the other, though he would have given much to see him. As for the four assassins, there could be no doubt that they were of the Brotherhood of the Heart and the Dagger.

"My dear Louis," he said, his look and tone revealing that he was greatly moved, "I cannot blame you for what you have done, but, O! I would have given half my fortune if you had been anywhere else just then. You say one of the villains escaped with life, and that you heard him called, *Jacques*. Was he a large-framed man?"

"A very giant in size, my lord."

"Ah! I know the man. If you are found here at the end of four-and-twenty hours, your head is doomed to fall!"

"Sir Philip!"

"It is as I have said, Louis. Base and low and wretched as were those four assassins, they were the agents of men high in social position and authority, and the avenger will be upon your track. Do not look incredulous. If you think they can find it impossible to convict a nobleman in France upon the evidence, you are mistaken."

"But, my dear Marquis, where is the crime?"

"Alas! dear boy, you have yet to learn the condition of your country. That you are a nobleman—of the blood of Liancourt and Miremont—is crime enough. But the mob hold rule. The order of the day is massacre! You must flee while there is time."

"I will go at once to Sedan, and there join La Fayette. With him I shall be safe."

The marquis groaned aloud.

"Ah! now, Louis, I can make you understand. You will not find La Fayette at Sedan, though the French army is there. First, let me tell you: The king and queen are prisoners! Aye—*prisoners*! They are confined in the old fortress of the Knights Templars, and guards are stationed over them. The same power—the Revolutionary mob—that imprisoned the king and queen sent commissioners to the army to preach their incendiary doctrines to the soldiers. La Fayette, as soon as he knew what those commissioners were doing, had them arrested and imprisoned. That was the end of his military rule. He had won the deadly enmity of the murderous mob, and they cried out boldly for his life. His crime was, that he would support the Constitution against anarchy and ruin. He was forced to flee from France to save his life. The treacherous Austrians caught him, and he is now a prisoner in a noisome dungeon in Olmutz. There is the noble La Fayette—the man who would give his life to-day for the good of his beloved France. Louis, you must flee."

Our hero sat for some moments in silence. His thoughts were in a bewildering whirl. By and by he suddenly caught his breath, and carried his hand to his brow.

"Sir Philip," he said, speaking in a low tone, but very distinctly, "Gideon de Bar has been with you to-day. What have we to fear from him?"

The marquis uttered a quick, low cry of pain, as though a dagger had pierced his bosom, and a wild, haggard look overspread his face. A few moments so, and then he started up and paced to and fro across the room, his head bent, and his hands clasped convulsively.

The count saw how terribly he was affected, and, if he could prevent it, he did not mean that d'Artois should regain sufficient composure to close his lips, so he gave another turn to the winding of the rack.

"My dear Marquis, I have not been blind. Do not think that the years have passed and left me ignorant of the fact that Gideon de Bar holds a terrible power over your peace of mind. O! if you would confide in me—if you would let me help you—"

"Louis!" cried the agonized man, stopping before the youth, and gazing upon him with a wild, dazed expression, "there is no help for me! O! if I could die—if I could, by dying, wipe out the past, I could lay me down to the sacrifice with joy supreme O! it is dreadful! dreadful!"

Louis de Liancourt found his worst fears realized. He was now sure that de Bar held the fatal power. The youth's next thought was—How was the heartless tyrant using his power? To what end? Enough had been told him, and he had seen enough else, to give direction to his suspicions. He arose to his feet and laid his hand upon the marquis's shoulder.

"Philip d'Artois, answer me the question I shall ask frankly and truly. Answer me, I beg—aye, I command! Gideon de Bar has used the power he possesses to extort from you money?"

"Yes," said Sir Philip, eagerly.

"And he has compelled you to lend your political influence to elevate him to office?"

"Yes, yes," but not quite so eagerly as before. Then he had evidently hoped that that was to be the only question, but now it appeared otherwise.

Aye—for presently de Liancourt went on, with an earnestness that was not to be slighted:

"And now—now, Sir Philip, the man demands the hand of your daughter for his son? He asks you to give Ninon d'Artois to be the wife of Gaston? Is it not so?"

"Oh, Heaven have mercy! Yes!"

And the wretched man sank down into his seat, and buried his face in his hands. His groans were heartrending, and his agony terrible.

Louis sat down and took the marquis's hand, and he spoke with kindness and with infinite tenderness:

"Sir Philip, you are all that is left to me of earth in whom I can repose the love and the trustfulness of a son. Will you not be a father to me? Oh, I will love you with my whole soul, and my whole strength, and I will serve you as I would serve an own, dearly loved parent. Let us help one another. Let us work together. If you will trust me with the story of this most unfortunate situation, I will bind myself by the word of a man that never broke the faith, to keep your secret while you will have it so. I know there could have been no intentional evil—no willing crime—on your part, no matter what the hold may be. Aye—I am not afraid, at this moment, knowing alone what I do know, to solemnly avouch for the truth and honor of Philip d'Artois!"

"God bless you, my son! God bless you!" cried the marquis, catching Louis's hand, and pressing it to his bosom. "As true as there is a heaven above us, you might give your word of avouchment without fear."

"Then why not unbosom yourself to me, and let me help you to bear the burden? O! you know that I have loved that dear girl well and truly. I love her now with the whole strength of my being, and I have told her so. The declaration burst from my lips as though of its own accord."

"And she—Ninon?" whispered the Marquis, gaspingly, seeming to have his gaze fixed on some object far beyond the then present surroundings.

"My dear Sir Philip, I do not need to tell you where Ninon's heart is. I do not flatter myself when I say it, but I speak the words of soberness and solemnity—Ninon's whole hope of life is bound up in her love for me. It is a love with her as it is with me, she has frankly told me this very night. Ah, meeting, as we did, in the dusky shadows of fading twilight, it was not apparent to sight how we had grown. We saw not with the eyes, but with our hearts. We gathered our feelings, not from reason, but from the awakened voice of the old love. O! it was as natural as the opening of the withering rose-leaf to the dews of heaven. She rested upon my bosom, as she had never before, and, as never before, I kissed her upon the lips. It was the instinctive sanctification of the love that had possessed our hearts through the years of our growing maturity—the pledge of the faith which those hearts yielded between the man and woman. What can I say more? Surely, my lord, you have anticipated this relation. In those other years, if you did not directly give me encouragement by spoken word, you did not dash the cup from my lips, which you surely would have done, had you seen that I was quaffing of the Erotic cup only to my own unhappiness."

When the marquis spoke again, his words were sad almost to weeping.

"Never, never, Louis, did I give you a spoken word of encouragement. I had no right."

"No right! In mercy's name! what does that mean?"

"Hush! O, let me think. Give me a few brief moments, Louis, and I will try if I can see my way. O, what agony is this!"

He started again across the room, and so continued for several minutes, pacing to and fro, wringing his hands at times as though he could tear out his poor life with right good will, while incoherent murmurings fell from his lips. At length, he stopped, stood for a little time irresolute, and then resumed his seat.

"Louis," he said, his voice husky and tremulous, "since I have been upon the floor I have lived over the agony of a lifetime, and in one direction I have resolved to suffer no more. I will no longer bear the killing burden alone. Should anything happen to cut short my days unexpectedly, one man, at least, shall know the very truth of a circumstance that may be given to the world against me. When I have told the story, you will know why I could never have given you verbal promise of Ninon's hand. You shall listen, and you shall then decide whether you will persist in your suit. If you should so persist, we must contrive some way of flight from France. We will succeed or fall together!"

"My father," said the count, reaching forth and grasping the marquis's hand, "let me give you one assurance in advance. Nothing that you can tell me—I care not what its nature—can swerve me from my faith of love and devotion to Ninon."

"Ah, my boy, be not too sure. And yet," the old nobleman added, with a change in his manner—a subdued and softened expression—"she is as true and pure as the angels in heaven!"

"Thank God! Now go on, Sir Philip. Let me hear the story. You know you can trust me. I pledge you my faith in advance; and I furthermore pledge myself that I will stand by you to the end. Your dangers shall be my dangers, and we will succeed or fail together. But we will not fail. If the worst comes, I have dear friends in England, and from England we can go to that glorious land of liberty and independence—the United States of America—where we shall find open arms and warm hearts on every hand."

This last speech seemed to touch the marquis in the right spot. It reached down and found the very hope that needed to be lifted up.

"America!" he repeated, solemnly. "Oh, I think in that fair land, with you and Ninon for my support, I could find a peace and joy which have been strange to me for many, many years. Listen to me, Louis, for I must tell the story before the courage fails me."

But an interruption came. Before Sir Philip could speak further there came a knock upon the door, and in answer to the demand of who was there, the old warder responded that it was he. The marquis arose with an exclamation of impatience, and went to the door and withdrew the bolt. And these were the circumstances:

Of late the warder of the chateau had had orders that no stranger was to be admitted within the gates after nightfall, except by permission of the master; and now there were two Franciscan friars without who earnestly begged food and shelter.

"Tell me, good Nicolas, what do they look like?"

The old warder shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, my lord, much like their fellows in general. They are dirty rascals, gray as a pair of badgers, though not so fat. I don't think they would steal anything which they could not reach, and we should be careful not to set temptation in their way."

It was a wonder that the lord of the great castle should hesitate in such a case, but he did, and he did it from an inner prompting which he could not put away. But he overcame the feeling, and gave directions that the mendicants should be admitted and fed, and a place of rest given them for the night.

After the warder had gone, he said to the count:

"There, Louis—if any evil follows in the tracks of those friars I shall have faith in presentiments. I don't know why it is, but they come in a cloud. However, let them rest. I cannot turn them away. And yet, I could have wished that we had been left alone for to-night. And now, my dear boy, I am going to startle you; but let me tell my story; don't interrupt me. I shall require all my strength of nerve and resolution."

He shot the bolt back into its fastening, and then returned to his seat. Before he sat down, however, he looked off into the shadowy distance, as though trying to see something that lay beyond. Was he thinking again of the two Franciscans? O! if he could have known them then, as he was to know them afterward, he would not have sat down while they were within his walls. But he did not know!

CHAPTER VI.

BRINGING FORTH THE SECRET.

Philip d'Artois took one turn across the library, and a student of human nature, well-versed in those finer subtleties of facial expression, watching him as he slowly and thoughtfully moved to and fro, could not have doubted that a subject of wondrous weight and moment burdened his mind. It might be said that he was literally bent beneath the weight. So heavily did the burden bear that he stooped, and his breathing was labored. A few moments after, crossing the room, he stopped, and then went to the sideboard, and took a silver flagon in his hand.

"Louis, will you drink a glass of wine? It is the pure Cote d' Or Burgundy, thirty years in my cellar."

"Excuse me, Sir Philip; I do not need it."

"And you will excuse me, my son, for I *do* need it."

He poured out a large measure and slowly drank it, after which he took his seat in the great easy-chair by the table, being careful to sit so that the light of the candles should not shine full in his face. For a little time he sat much like a man about to submit to a painful surgical operation. His effort at self-control was apparent, and a mighty effort at that. The silence was becoming oppressive. The count's heart was throbbing tumultuously, for he knew that he was to hear something that would move him deeply, and the suspense was painful. At length the silence was broken. The voice was low and tremulous, and the words seemed forced up from a cavernous depth.

"Louis, I can hardly realize that I am about to give to mortal ear the secret I have so long carried in my bosom; but so it is. Circumstances have arisen which render the revealment almost imperative. Form no opinion until you have heard me through, for you cannot rightly judge until you know all."

He changed his position, took a long breath, and then commenced his story:

"Now, my dear boy, listen to me, and allow me to tell my story in my own way, only believe me when I assure you that I will tell you the whole, without curtailment of any kind, and without the concealing of a single important particular. You remember my wife. She was the daughter of Colonel Jovin de Lusange, a veteran of Louis XV.'s grand army. I may truthfully say, that Pauline de Lusange was one of the fairest women in France, and when I won her for my wife, be sure there were plenty to envy me. Two men in particular, however, I have to notice. One was a tapestry weaver of Arras, a sordid, low-lived, unprincipled man, named Gideon de Bar—I see you start. Yes, he was the same who visited me this evening. He had money, and he had assurance, and he professed to love Pauline. My soul! what a man for her hand! She despised and loathed him, and when she had fairly kicked the knowledge of her true feelings into his perverse head he professed to believe that I had prejudiced her against him. He saw that I was her accepted lover, and it made him angry, and I have no doubt that he swore vengeance. At all events, when Pauline had become my wife, he showed to us both that he considered himself ill-used, though he professed to care nothing for it. That is, he proclaimed that he was well rid of a woman who could not appreciate him. The fact that many people laughed at him did not make him at all friendly in his feelings toward me. Gideon de Bar never married, though he would have the world believe that he made poor Rachel Tigny his wife.

"The other man of whom I must speak was Colonel Juan de Saint Denis. He was an officer of artillery, and commanded the citadel of Arras. He was a brave man, and handsome, but loose and abandoned. He had won the love of a bright-eyed, beautiful grisette, of

Arras, named Alice Marmont, and I discovered that he had been secretly married to her. Colonel Saint Denis's official rank and position brought him into friendly and close relations with Pauline's father, and when he saw Pauline, he fell desperately in love off-hand. He not only fell in love with her, but he told his love, and urged his suit; and so well did he prosper therein that she began to feel an interest in him. She only knew him as she saw him at her father's house, and it must be borne in mind that he possessed those qualities most attractive to a vivacious, imaginative woman. He was every inch a soldier, brave and dashing, and, as I have already said, handsome. Colonel de Lusange knew him only as the commandant of the defences of the town, and he thought a man entrusted by his king with so important a trust must be worthy, and he did not forbid his visits.

"At that time I had never spoken to Pauline of love, but I loved her, nevertheless, though it was without selfishness that I warned her of Saint Denis's true character, and of the fact that he was already married—that he had a wife, beautiful and good—a wife as true to him as wife could be. Of course, from that moment, Pauline would listen no more to Juan's suit, and when he found that she knew of his marriage, he ceased his visits. By some means he learned that it was I who had furnished Pauline and her father with knowledge of his true character and standing, and his wrath was without bounds. He was a vastly different man from Gideon de Bar. What he felt he spoke, and if he had enmity in his bosom, he did not seek to hide it. When, in course of time, Pauline became my wife, Juan de Saint Denis swore vengeance—swore it to my face—and bade me beware.

"Thus, my son, we come to my married life. My wife bore me two children, a son and a daughter. The son died at the age of six years. The birth of the daughter cost Pauline her life, and the child did not long survive her mother. —I see you start. Ah! Louis! Louis! you here have a part of my terrible secret. Hold your breath, and be not cast down—NINON *is not my child!* No blood of mine is in her veins. I do not wonder that you turn pale. But listen: I am now coming to that fearful burden which, for so many years, has rested like an incubus of death upon me:

"Pauline became my wife, and there were two men who had sworn vengeance against me. In the circumstances that befell, there was so much that was marvelous—such a working together of different forces, and such a perfect adaptation of certain parts toward the end reached, that I must believe the whole was a carefully elaborated plot for my destruction. No mere play of chance could have brought about the result that was reached. As well as anything may be known, which my own senses did not directly see, or feel, or hear, do I know that there was a prepared plot, thoroughly arranged in all its parts, and calculated to the end of my destruction; and though I was not the only victim, yet he who shared with me the result, was villain enough to lend himself to the plot in the outset, little dreaming that he was going to his own destruction, though I fancy de Bar had it in mind from the first. Thus it was:

"One day—it was on the day that the news reached us that Louis XV. was dead—as I was passing through the forest toward the Bridge of Cressy, in that part where the path is narrow and uneven, I was met by Colonel Juan de Saint Denis. He had evidently been drinking, but was by no means intoxicated. He had lately been drinking a great deal, so I had heard; and had been gambling, and I had heard it said that he had spent a great deal of money which had been left in his hands by government for the garrison. He met me, there in the forest, and stopped me. I cannot tell you what he said; I can only tell you that the vials of his wrath were uncorked, and his rage let loose upon me in a furious, profane, fiery, vindictive and murderous flood. He swore that I had blasted his character; that I had destroyed his peace of mind forever; that I had traduced him; and he even had the heart to accuse me of having broken the heart of his Alice, the mother of his child. O! I cannot tell you what terrible things he said; but worse than all else, he swore that he had never sought to gain Pauline's affection; that my efforts in that direction had been wholly gratuitous, and that the only thing I had accomplished had been the death of his true wife. He said he was a ruined man, and that I had ruined him; and he then demanded satisfaction. He would attack me, and I might defend myself, or be cut down like a dog, as I pleased. With that he drew his sword, and I saw that he was in earnest. I had no choice. He would not let me speak. I drew my own blade, and in a moment more the clashing of steel rang through the forest. He was the best swordsman in Artois—a far better swordsman than I, and much stronger: but fortune was against him, and in a moment when I least expected it, my point entered his bosom. His foot had slipped upon a rolling stone, and in his effort to regain his equilibrium he pitched forward directly upon the point of my sword, for I had held it suspended in mid air when the accident happened. The point entered his bosom, and he fell.

"I had started forward for the purpose of lifting his head, when I heard footsteps approaching, and a moment afterward Gideon de Bar came upon the scene. He said he had heard the clashing of swords, and had come to see what was the matter. And then, in a startled manner, having seen the fallen man, he caught me by the arm, and bade me to hide myself in the wood. Said he—O, I remember his every word and look and tone:

"'Sir Philip, I hear people coming. This man was their idol. Remember—he was related to that *Robert le Diable* who was executed for attempting to assassinate the king who is just dead. If they find Saint Denis dead, and you here with his blood upon your hands, they will tear you limb from limb. Flee you to the cover of the wood, and I will care for him. If he has life in him I will revive him.'

"Thus spoke to me Gideon de Bar. I was beyond the power of calm reflection. Touching Saint Denis's relationship to Robert François Damiens, the man who gained such notoriety from his attempt to assassinate Louis XV., he was related only by marriage, but that was sufficient in the eyes of the *sans culottes* to canonize him. Without consideration—with my brain in a whirl—I plunged into the wood, where I remained for half an hour, as near as I could judge. At the end of that time I crept back. As I came to an opening, where I could look upon the scene of our conflict, I saw de Bar upon his knees, supporting Saint Denis in his arms. He had been writing upon a sheet of paper. He had had pen and ink and paper with him. He said his business required that he should carry them when away from home. He had been taking down the man's dying statement, and as I came up he had put the pen into Saint Denis's hand, and he was signing his name. He had strength to do that, with de Bar to guide his hand, and after that he sank back. I rushed to the spot, and Gideon de Bar arose to his feet, and showed me the paper, with a great stain of blood upon it, where Saint Denis's hand had rested upon it. At that moment I heard not only the sound of approaching feet, but the voices of a multitude. De Bar cried out to me again to flee. Said he—'Flee for your life, and I will turn suspicion away from you. They are his friends coming!' And he took me by the arm to lead me away. I asked if Saint Denis was dead. 'Yes,' said de Bar. 'Look for yourself. His last effort of life was the signing of this document. His bitter enmity sustained him till that was done, and then the last breath was drawn. But I will save you. Flee at once, and they shall never know.'

"I gave one look at the man I had accidentally slain—saw that he was really dead—and then fled. I reached my home, though I know not how, that night, at a late hour. Gideon de Bar came to me, and showed me the paper, but would not trust it in my hands. It was entitled, '*The Dying Declaration, under Oath, of Colonel Juan de Saint Denis, Commanding French Forces at Arras.*' And then it went on, in direct and absolute statement, that he had fallen by the hand of the Marquis Sir Philip d'Artois, of Saint Omer—that Philip d'Artois had murdered him—that I—*I*—had first ruined his character, and blasted his every earthly prospect, and had ended my work of enmity by killing him!

"O! Louis, it was terrible! I asked de Bar if he meant to hold that paper—I asked him if he did not know it was false. I told him the solemn truth—how Juan de Saint Denis had first drawn upon me, and how I had drawn in absolute self-defence, and how, even after that, his death was the result of a most unfortunate accident, and not from a blow aimed by me. But de Bar only smiled grimly, and shook his head.

"But I need not tell you more of that. You can see the whole for yourself. That man had me in his power, and he knew it; aye—and I knew it! What would my declaration amount to by the side of that bloody sign-manual of a dying man? I knew that a howl of indignation would go up when it was known that Saint Denis had been slain in the forest. And so it was. The excitement was intense. You must remember it. You were five years old then, or nearly that."

"I remember," said Louis. "Aye, I remember very well how my father came in, and told us at the table; and how he said that doubtless the man had been slain in a drunken quarrel; or, if such had not been the case, that he might have taken his own life; for I think he was, at the time of his death, a defaulter to a large amount."

"He was," pursued the marquis, "and the minister, Turgot, had sent a commission to examine into his affairs. It was while that commission was in Arras that he met me in the forest. What a tempest there was! The mob believed that it had been a plot of the aristocrats to get him out of the way. He became apotheosized at once, and his memory was held in veneration as an enemy of the nobility, and a champion of the people. Good heavens! had it been whispered then, that the Marquis of Saint Omer did the deed, I should have been literally torn in pieces. The *sans culottes* of Paris would have come to see it done!

"And so I was tied. Perhaps— But no—I could not have done differently. That man held in his hand an instrument as fatal to me, when he pleased to make it so, as a *lettre de cachet*. He promised that he would not be severe, but I could take that for what it was worth. I could not calmly and deliberately give myself up to an ignominious death, and my name to universal execration, and I bowed my neck to the yoke. My wife had been dead several months at that time, and my infant daughter was dying. I discovered that Colonel Saint Denis had left a daughter, motherless and totally unprovided for. I asked de Bar to bring the child to me, and he did so—brought it, and swore to me that he would never, while I kept faith with him, tell to a human being that the little one was not my own offspring. The least, and the most, I could do, was to care for that child; and I think I have been all that a father could have been.

"Louis, our blessed Ninon—she whom you love—is that child! She must not know it yet. There is no need. Or, at any rate, we will keep it from her as long as we can. Now, my boy, you can comprehend the power of Gideon de Bar. Think of the present condition of France. Look at the nation's real, responsible rulers. Now, just picture to yourself this proclamation made in the market-place to-morrow. We can imagine it. Gideon de Bar, mayor of Arras, standing before the people, will cry aloud to them something like this—listen:

"'My dear Citizens and Citizenesses, you remember the brave and gallant patriot and soldier, that friend of the people, Colonel Juan de Saint Denis? You remember him as the near and dear relative of the king-killer, *Robert le Diable!* You remember how he was assassinated in the forest of Saint Jean just after the death of the human fiend and monster, Louis Capet, called *King*—the Fifteenth of that name! Well—I can tell you whose hand shed that precious blood!'"—

At this point the marquis trembled so convulsively that he spoke with difficulty, and Louis put out his hand and stopped him.

"Enough, father! I can see it all. I can see it as plainly, and as surely, as though the scene were actually transpiring before my very eyes."

"And, my son, you can see what the result would be?"

"Yes—yes."

"Then what remains for us to do? Gideon de Bar has been to me, and held that bloody paper before me, and demanded Ninon's hand. If I do not give it on the morrow—"

"How!" cried Louis, interrupting. "Give Ninon's hand—*to-morrow?*"

"If I do not to-morrow sign the marriage contract, which, you are aware, is legally a marriage. The priestly ceremony is necessary to a full consummation, but the signed contract is legally binding. What shall we do?"

"Whatever we do must be done quickly, father?"

"Yes."

"You would not sign that contract, if you could avoid it?"

"No!"

"Would you leave your wealth behind you, if flight were possible?"

"Ah, my son, I fear me there would be but little sacrifice in that. I do firmly believe that it is Gideon de Bar's purpose to strip me entirely. If he were to publish that paper, property and life would both go in a twinkling. I know the fiend thoroughly. He has no heart—no conscience. He would glory in the deed of working my utter ruin, and the Jacobins would elevate him upon my downfall."

Louis de Liancourt arose from his seat, and walked slowly to and fro across the room. When he came back, he laid his hand upon the marquis's shoulder.

"Sir Philip, think of Ninon. Would she live long if she were sacrificed to—"

"Speak not the word. It shall not be!"

"Then our course is clear. We have not an hour—not a moment—to spare. The morrow's sun must not find us here. I am satisfied, upon reflection, that search will be made for the nobleman who slew the three—or helped to slay—the three Jacobin butchers. There is nothing to prevent our being upon the road before midnight. You have some money, and some jewels?"

"Yes—thank Heaven! I have enough for all possible need, at least, for the present. My jewels are valuable."

"And I, also, have a goodly store. Ninon, too, has jewels which her—the marchioness left. My attendant, Martin, is a treasure. You have one or two servants whom you can trust; or, we may think it best to take a goodly force, well armed. From here to *Saint Jean-sur-Mer* is not more than thirteen leagues. The road is mostly your own, and horses may be taken on the way anywhere. At that port I know we shall find a vessel. We will purchase one, if necessary. Once on the sea, and we are safe!"

Philip d'Artois started to his feet with a cry of hopeful joy.

"Louis," he exclaimed, seizing the young man's hand, "it shall be done as you have said. It is our only hope, and it is safe."

"Aye," added Louis, "and we may consider it sure. What shall hinder us? We can be upon the sea before the breaking of another day."

"If we are speedy now."

"Yes."

"Then let us be moving."

And then they started forth to the work of preparation. Death was sure to them if they remained till another day in Artois. In England they would find safety.

And Louis de Liancourt echoed Sir Philip's fervent prayer as he went forth to summon his faithful attendant. The marquis was to call Ninon, and prepare her for the sudden undertaking.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

—Do not shorten the long nights by slumber, nor prolong the short days by wickedness.

A LITTLE LONGER.

BY MRS. M. A. KIDDER.

Trust the lad a little longer—
Do not fear.
He may better grow, and stronger,
Father, dear!
Stronger in his faint endeavor
To be wise,
Better as he tries to sever
Evil ties.
Scarcely twenty years have brightened
And grown sere
Since, a babe, our hearts he lightened
Father, dear!
How we loved our little brother,
Sisters three:
Not in all the world another
Such as he!
Then, one gloomy, dark December
Oh, how drear!
Mother left us all, remember,
Father, dear!
And before she entered, smiling,
Into joy,
"Love," she said, with voice beguiling,
"Love my boy."
Benny's eyes, so like to mother's,
Blue and clear,
Strangely move me like no others,
Father, dear!
Though his feet are given to straying
In his youth,
Let us hope he, Heaven obeying,
May seek truth.
Trust the lad, though now rebelling—
Do not fear!
Turn him not from this our dwelling,
Father, dear!
Bear with him a little longer
In his sin;
Love will make his poor heart stronger—
We shall win.

ONE PAIR OF GLOVES.

BY AMELIA E. BARR.

Twenty-three years ago this autumn, a little boat was dropping slowly down the Medway, below the old stone bridge of Maidstone. In it was Ralph Erroll and Bessie Farleigh, and there is small wonder they did not hurry their journey, for to them it was a sail into Loveland. Bessie was beautiful, and the evening was beautiful. The air was redolent with the rich, balmy, bitter odor of hops; far and near were the little camps of the pickers, and drifting in fitful strains over the river the echoes of their song and laughter.

It was not an evening when love needed to plead; he could let his presence blend with all other sweet influences, and trust to the effect. Bessie felt the charm of the sweet gloaming, and the still stronger charm of Ralph's presence. By and by the boat drifted into a cove, and stepping ashore, they were in a park that rose gradually toward an old gray Hall.

"See, Ralph, there are lights in the parlor; we must go home."

"Wait here one minute, Bessie—I have something to ask you. When I have made a little practice in London, will you be my wife? Answer me truly now, like a good, honest girl ought to."

"I will, Ralph."

And when they came in among the old-fashioned flower-beds, they were solemnly pledged to share life's fortune together. For one minute they stood leaning on an old sun-dial, and in the newly risen moon everything about Bessie had a strangely witching beauty. Ralph could not help noticing how exceedingly small and shapely was the hand that lay in his, and how dainty and pretty the pearl-colored kid glove that covered it.

When they parted, he said:

"Bessie, this has been a great night for me; give me this glove that I may know to-morrow it was not all a dream."

Bessie laid it in her lover's hand with a smile and a kiss.

"Take it, Ralph," she said, "it is my gage that I will redeem my promise."

Ralph put the delicate little pledge away and went up to London. He had something to work for and hope now, and he soon made these influences tell. Bessie's parents had not objected to the match. Squire Farleigh was the poorest of a long race of Kentish squires, and though the old Hall and lands remained, he had not been a successful farmer, and money was very scarce with him. There seemed nothing better for Bessie than that she should marry Ralph Erroll, for house and lands must go to her brother Tom, and every year the savings toward her dower had been less and less.

But the very next spring after Bessie's engagement, a speculative neighbor who had money proposed to the squire the planting of the rich meadows of Farleigh in hops. Every one knows that the culture of hops is the gambling of agriculture. As it happened, it was a lucky move for Squire Farleigh. It was a new crop to his lands; the yield was enormous, and the rate of duty—on which everything hangs—unusually small. When the picking was over, the hops sold, and profits divided, the squire had £4,000 in the bank.

Everything looked different now. He had found an El Dorado at his own door, and could do nothing but abuse the conventional stupidity which had led him always to plant wheat and oats and feed cattle, simply because the squires before him had always done so.

But he was no better able to bear sudden riches than most men are. He immediately launched into unusual expenses—refurnished the Hall, and rebuilt his kennels, and bought a couple of hunting horses. There was plenty of time for Bessie's dower; next year's crop would provide for her; and indeed he had already begun to doubt the wisdom of Bessie's choice. He told himself that she would never live in a close city, and a doctor to him was only associated with scenes of death and misery.

The next year's crop was another success, and the squire began to build fine *oast-houses* on his land, for he was now determined to have everything necessary to the culture of hops of the very latest and best description. In the meantime the whole family were learning extravagances never thought of in the days of simple farming. Tom Farleigh put no stint to his pleasures, and they were all of an expensive kind, and Bessie had developed equally extensive desires in the way of dress and watering-places. The squire, with all his influx of ready money, was always in a tight place.

In the second winter of her engagement Bessie went to stay with a new acquaintance in London. As far as Ralph was concerned, it was a very unhappy visit. He loved Bessie with all his heart. Bessie had begun to love many other things besides Ralph. The charms of London society, in all their splendid novelty, captivated her imagination. A life without the Park and the opera, without balls and shopping, seemed like a return to the dark simplicity of Farleigh before the hop days.

Bessie thought she loved Ralph yet, but she did not know her own heart until, one day, Ralph took her to see a little cottage at Richmond, and told her how much his income was, asking her honestly to redeem her pledge to him at once. She was struck with dismay at the apparent narrowing of her life, and positively refused to accede to an immediate marriage.

Indeed, the possibility of breaking it off had now entered her mind, and being once admitted, it made rapid progress, and found plenty of reasons and excuses for its conduct. Ralph felt the change, but love is always blind where it does not want to see; and one morning, when he read her engagement in the *Morning Chronicle* to a wealthy magnate of the East Indian Board, he felt as if his life had been suddenly smitten with blindness.

When a man is constant, there is no constancy like it. Ralph refused to blame Bessie; everything and everybody were wrong but her; and he treasured the little glove, that had been such a faithless gage, beyond all his possessions. Day after day he watched the post with a feverish hope that incapacitated him for every other employment. He wrote and wrote to Bessie, and was quite sure that sooner or later she would find means to answer him. The only answer that ever came was a description of her marriage festivities down at the old Hall of Farleigh.

Then he knew that his love was dead to him, and he tried to bury it in some sweet-scented corner of his heart; but just as he thought he was succeeding, he one day came suddenly face to face with Bessie in Oxford Street. He suffered so keenly after it that he determined on putting himself out of the way of such rencounters. So he advertised for some medical position and had three answers. One would take him to Canada, one to Ireland, and the other to India. He determined to let the decision rest on whichever offered him the highest salary.

The Indian appointment won, and within a few weeks he was on the road to Calcutta. He had destroyed every memento of his engagement except one; but on that last night in England, when he had sadly burnt Bessie's letters, and her little gifts, and even her picture, he had not been able to commit to destruction that dainty little glove that had so long comforted him. It seemed almost a part of Bessie, and though he several times dropped it toward the flame, he finally put it away with a sad and half-reproachful tenderness.

It found its home in no very romantic place—a secret drawer in his medicine chest—and there through eighteen long years it remained untouched and unlooked at. In this retreat it went with Ralph to Calcutta, and after a few months he had no temptation to disturb it. He had become an enthusiast in his profession, and a devoted botanist, and in the two pursuits found ample interest for life.

His salary was a very good one, and he was not indifferent to the fact. He loved money just enough to be anxious to make it; and as his practice lay very much among native princes and begums, his professional rewards were frequently very magnificent—twenty years ago these dignitaries did not calculate quite so closely as they do now—good investments were plentiful, and Ralph was known in Calcutta as a man who always had a few thousand rupees for a profitable scheme.

He grew attached to his Indian life. One relay of officers after another was exchanged, or sent home on long furloughs, but Ralph never thought of any change save a few weeks every summer to the cool heights of the *Neilgherrys*. Probably he would have died a very contented exile, if he had not received a letter in the eighteenth year of his Indian life, telling him that he had become the lawful heir to the barony of Erroll and Hastings.

Then he went back to England. But after the first excitement and pleasure of his return and his new position were over, he began to feel a sense of *ennui* and disappointment. His profession was dear to his heart, and it was impossible at once to find the calm, easy duties of a country gentleman equivalent for the exciting incidents and labors of a physician whose circuit had extended over a range of fifty miles every way. In fact, in spite of wealth and honors, he was bored, and seriously inclined to a journey of unlimited length in any country or countries that promised him something to do, or to learn.

He had come up to London with this idea in embryo, resolving to make inquiries and preparations there. Bessie had no place in this movement. He knew indeed that she was living in Hampshire; he had no thought or hope of meeting her, and would have avoided such a possibility at some personal trouble. Probably he still feared her power over him, for he had never dared to look at the only souvenir of their love, nor yet to love any other woman.

He did not hurry his preparations, but talked at the various clubs with various travellers on polar and tropic lands, and wavered considerably in his intentions. One day, when he had about decided on California and the Great West, he met an old Indian acquaintance at "The Oriental." They had a long chat together, and as the major was leaving, he said:

"Doctor, I want you to-morrow night. My daughter Belle—you saved her in that jungle-fever, you know—is to be married soon to Jack Dawson of 'Ours,' and it is her betrothal party."

"I never meddle in such affairs, Major. I will come another night and see Miss Belle."

But the happy father would hear of no excuse, and Ralph was obliged to go. It was a very splendid affair, but the doctor was used to Indian magnificence, and the splendor did not interest him. What pleased him most was the groups of fair, innocent-looking girls, their pale-brown curls, and blue eyes, and rosy skins, and their candid, childlike joyousness, contrasted so vividly with the bronze-colored, dark-eyed, half-vailed mysterious beauties of the far East.

By and by, wandering through a conservatory, he came suddenly upon a sight which gave him an inexpressible emotion—a little, scented, pearl-colored glove, lying on a rustic table. He stood looking at it with a strangely tender feeling in his heart, and in a few moments a young girl glided up to him and looking shyly in his face, said:

"It is my glove, sir."

Then Ralph looked at her. She was a little rosebud of a girl, clothed in pearl-gray silk, white lace, and pink ribbons; and he fell irremediably in love with her in that one moment. He followed her timidly about for an hour or two, and finally got an introduction to her—"Miss Bessie Wilmont." It was Bessie Farleigh's daughter, of course, but he was thinking so little of the old Bessie at that moment, that the circumstance never struck him until some one asked the new Bessie as they passed her, "when she went next to Farleigh?"

Well, this meeting changed all Ralph's plans. He did not go to California; he went down to Farleigh instead.

He found the squire alive and prospering. Farleigh Hall had become one of the show-places in Kent; and in its old gardens, and again floating down the Medway, when hops filled the air with a richer perfume than olibanum or nard, he wooed and won the lovely Bessie Wilmont.

He has two little pearl-colored gloves now, and the first Bessie laughed pleasantly when he showed her that the two were excellent matches, *and made a pair.*

"The second gage redeems the first," she said, with a tender, happy look at the little Bessie so dear to them both.

Three years ago they were married, and Ralph does not now find the country gentleman's life dull. Indeed, as he has some idea of taking Squire Farleigh's advice and planting hops in Erroll meadows, I have no doubt he will find in the uncertainty and anxiety of their culture, taxation and sale plenty of material for excitement, if he still thinks it necessary to happiness.

A CUTTING RETORT.

"A Roland for an Oliver," is a common expression, and if its origin is not clearly understood, its meaning is never doubtful—that is, to any one who can think and reason. But here is an expression not so transparent of meaning: "I answer you as Elliston answered Roswell on a like occasion"—wrote an irate playwright not long since to the manager of one of our large theatres; and the note was published; and when I had read, I straightway sought to find how that aforetime answer referred to had run. I was fortunate enough to find it among a budget of scraps concerning Robert William Elliston, a celebrated English actor, and author of several successful dramas, whose professional career covered the first quarter of the present century.

Elliston had refused to allow his drama, "The Venetian Outlaw," to be produced upon the stage of the Adelphi; but he could see no good reason why that should prevent him from visiting one or two of his intimate friends behind the Adelphi scenes. The manager, upon being informed of these continued visits upon the rear of his stage, addressed a note to the actor as follows:

"MR. ELLISTON, *Sir*—I understand you have had the temerity to intrude yourself behind the curtain of my theatre. In order to spare you a greater mortification, I have ordered the door-keepers to refuse you admission should you again present yourself. ROSWELL."

The following was the rejoinder, returned by the hand of the manager's own messenger:

"ROSWELL—I have heard of a puddle in a storm, and of a puppy in a tearing, snarling passion; and I can only say that your note of this day affords me opportunity to scorn the one, and laugh at the other.

"ELLISTON."

If our manager on this side had ever seen the above correspondence, he must have felt himself comprehensively answered. S. C., JR.

WIT AND HUMOR.

SHERIDAN, to test the acoustic qualities of a new theatre he had built, desired the carpenter to speak on the stage while he would go and listen to him from the gallery. "Now, then," said Sheridan, when he had ascended. The carpenter responded: "I and my mates have been working here for the last six weeks, and we should like to see the color of your honor's money!" "That will do," said Sheridan; "the acoustics are perfect."

OUT in Dakota, recently, a stage load of passengers being compelled to hold their hands above their heads while a gang of highwaymen robbed them, one of the victims remarked: "This is a high-handed piece of business!" whereupon the robbers laughed, and allowed him to keep his watch as a reward for his humor.

A GENTLEMAN was instrumental in getting a cook for a newly married friend, and upon meeting the cook's sister some time afterward, he asked her how her relative liked the place, to which she promptly replied: "Oh, very well, sir! The master and mistress are quite gentlefolk. They don't know anything."

A MAN who thought he knew more than his wife about marketing, lately went to market to buy a turtle. "See here," said he, pointing to a small one, "this is about the size, and I want you to warrant it to be a genuine turtle, for I am not going to have you putting off any of your mock turtles on me!"

FATHER (to his little son, who has just handed him his teacher's report of progress and conduct for the last month)—"This report is very unsatisfactory. I am not at all pleased with it." *Little son*—"I told the teacher I thought you wouldn't be, but he wouldn't alter it."

"I HOPE there are no cannibals around here," said a stupid traveller to a frontier girl, as she was mixing a batch of bread. "Plenty of 'em," said she, pouring some corn meal into the pan. "We almost always eat a little Indian with our bread."

OLD Deacon Pilkins said to himself: "Falstaff asks, 'What 's honor?' as though it was hard to tell. But let my wife sit behind another woman at church, and she 'll tell *what 's on her* in less than two minutes."

IT is reported that the thermometer went down to 42 degrees below zero, the other night, at Fairfield, Me. Everybody likes "a fair field and no favor," but we think no one would like such a Fairfield as that.

A MAN who recently went into stock speculations, was met by a friend, the other day, who asked him if he had made anything. "Yes," said he; "I made an assignment this morning."

THE sun is shining uncomfortably warm, this January day, as we are writing this; and one might say: "Now is the winter of this continent made Indian summer, by—" etc.

A RECENT news item from the seat of war in Asia said: "The snow around Erzeroum is three feet deep, and the Russians are out in great numbers *slaying*—Turks."

"MOTHER," said a little five-year-old, "have you heard that Uncle John got shot yesterday?" "Why, no! Dear me! How did he get shot?" "Oh, he bought 'em."

THE young clerk who, instead of writing $10,000, as he should have done, wrote $1,000, might have prevented his mistake by a little fourth ought.

THE sudden start of a horse-car threw a lady who was standing, into a gentleman's lap, whereupon a newsboy cried out: "There's a Lap-lander!"

A LITTLE boy, sentenced to be whipped, said: "Very well; go ahead. All I ask is to take chloroform before you begin."

A MAN who lately sent a communication to a newspaper, signed it ÆQUITAS, but the signature came out "A Quiet Ass."

"OUR butcher," said an old lady, "never has any venison in his shop, but he always has a plenty of *dear* meat."

AN irrepressible joker, in selling a horse, said: "He's a good war steed; he'd sooner die than run."

WHY are hens like ambitious men? Because they always want to get on the highest roost.

A "SIGN" of indigestion: "Gone to dinner—will be back in five minutes."

CURRENT ITEMS.

MRS. MARIAM BERRY, a widow, sixty-five years of age, was shot dead in her own house in New Durham, N. H., on Wednesday afternoon of last week, by a man whom she had hired to chop wood for her. The murderer was drunk when he committed the crime, and was soon after found by the roadside, near the house, with his throat cut; but it was thought he would recover.

MR. CHARLES A. BELL, of Fairfax, Vt., was married on New Year's Day and went to Montreal on his wedding tour, where he had a shock of paralysis and was ordered home by a physician. He got as far as Rutland, where he suddenly died on Wednesday of last week.

ONE night last week, at Concord, Ky., a deputy sheriff and his posse attempted to arrest a couple of desperadoes known as "the Underwood Brothers." A fight ensued, in which the deputy sheriff was killed, but both the Underwoods were captured, badly wounded.

THE other day, two friends named John Desmond and William Powers, while drinking in a saloon in Albany, got into a quarrel, and Desmond's skull was so badly fractured by an accidental blow that he died of his injuries the next day, and Powers was lodged in jail.

ONE day recently, during the recess at a grammar school in East Stoughton, Mass., a boy of sixteen stabbed a boy fourteen years old with a jack-knife, making a wound in the left arm reaching to the bone. He was expelled from the school.

A WOMAN in Ashland, Pa., was found insensible in her bed, and her little son dead at her side, on Thursday morning of last week. It was supposed they were suffocated by the fumes of sulphur from a new heater in the cellar.

WHILE a couple of men were blasting, recently, in West Lubec, Me., a premature explosion took place, whereby one of them was seriously injured, and the other was killed instantly.

AT Westchester, Conn., on Wednesday, a week ago, the boiler connected with a steam shovel exploded, dangerously wounding a bystander, and killing the fireman.

MRS. JABEZ KING, sixty-eight years old, of Thompsonville, Conn., was run over by a team on Wednesday evening of last week, and killed by concussion of the brain.

MR. NEWMAN, of East Stoneham, Me., while walking along with a loaded gun a few days ago, slipped and shot himself, was carried home, and died in a short time.

SADIE SHARP, eleven years old, and Ella Hazeltine, aged fifteen, were drowned on Sunday a week ago, by breaking through the ice on a pond near Hyannis, Mass.

TIMOTHY SULLIVAN, of Bristol, Conn., while playing with a pistol, accidentally shot himself in the arm, which was afterward amputated, and Sullivan died.

A HOTEL clerk, of Salisbury, Conn., named Fries, became unsettled in mind recently, and committed suicide by taking laudanum and morphine.

A MAD dog attacked a girl in North Haven, Conn., the other day, and bit her on the foot, and then bit her father's dog that came to her defence.

THE Rev. Leroy Gaston, a prominent Presbyterian minister of Memphis, Tenn., fell dead in the street at Little Rock, Ark., one day recently.

A YOUNG man named Monroe Gresh was lately struck on the head with a clock weight, near New Hanover, Pa., and died of the injury.

ON Tuesday of last week, at Indianapolis, Ind., Charles B. Hager was killed by falling from an upper tier of bunks in a stationhouse.

MRS. CRANE, an aged widow residing at Elizabeth, N. J., while getting up one morning lately, fell out of bed and broke her neck.

ON Thursday morning of last week, an old man, named James Mahan, was found frozen to death in the road, near Antwerp, N. Y.

A GUEST at a hotel in Ohio lately twisted a spool of cotton into a cord, with which he hanged himself to a hat peg in his bedroom.

JAMES MCMULLEN, supposed to be partially insane, killed his wife with a club at West Osgrode, Ontario, one night recently.

ALONZO GIBBS, of Brandon, Vt., was recently thrown from his wagon and injured so severely that he died a few days afterward.

JULIUS FULLER, aged seventy years, fell from a bridge in Avon, Conn., on Thursday of last week, and was killed.

A WOMAN in Warsaw, N. Y., was recently sentenced to imprisonment for life for grand arson.

WOOD REVERIE.

BY MRS. EMILY THORNTON.

Odors of wild wood flowers, the fragrant eglantine,
Fill the still air,
Sprays of sweet honeysuckle, dew-gemmed, pink and green,
Float here and there,
While memories haunt the soul, of perfumes gone, but rare.

Crushed violets, whose dying breath was redolent
With sweets distill'd,
And pearly locust blossoms, pouring their wild scent,
Till woods were fill'd
With perfume, and the heart with joy was strangely thrill'd.

Thoughts flood our memories, as faces haunt our dreams,
Or music past,
Forgotten tunes, or old-time songs, that ever seems
O'er us to cast
A rush of tender feelings far too sweet to last.

Strange, why life's sweet things pass so soon! How short, how brief
Their mystic sway!
Life is made up of fading beauties; no relief
From swift decay!
We live, we hope, we droop, we fade, then pass away.

And so in nature, as in life, flowers gay and sweet
We gladly trace,
Sweetbrier roses, daisies, cowslips neat
The meadows grace,
Trip through the glens, then die, and others take their place.

Birds too, whose plumage glitters in the dazzling light
When on the wing,
Whose sudden bursts of melody, then rapid flight,
Is saddening,
As whispers of sweet change their airy passage bring.

All these rouse reveries, strange reveries of death,
Of passing hours,
Of moments flying hence, of disappearing breath,
Of weakened powers,
And of a better land, more lasting far than ours.

THE LORD OF STRATHMORE; OR, The Hidden Crime.

By LEON LEWIS.

CHAPTER XV.

A SAIL.

The operation of making a fire in the rain proved difficult, but not insurmountable. Chandos found a comparatively sheltered spot under an overhanging rock, and brought here a supply of branches, which he discovered in hollows of the grove. The supply of matches was running short, and it required two or three to kindle the damp wood he had gathered into a sickly blaze. The spectral-looking ship had passed out of sight in the mist, and he did not believe that her return would be immediate, as the wind was blowing from the northward.

He cooked the breakfast, and carried a portion of it to Miss Pelham's hut. Her father was still with her, and received it at the door. He took the remainder to the men's hut, and joined with the others in its consumption.

Not until the meal was concluded did he inform his companions of the proximity of the *Clytemnestra*. His announcement produced dismay, excitement and consternation. Lord Strathmore was full of exclamations; Mr. Gray offered many suggestions; but, as usual, it was to Ralph Chandos that all turned for direction. His bravery, his unselfishness, his cool, prompt fertility of resource, his marked ability, made him a natural leader of men, and even Lord Strathmore, who hated him, and Mr. Gray, who despised him for his supposed wickedness, and for being a convict, turned to him in their despair for guidance, under the hypocritical pretense of merely asking his opinion.

"I think," said Chandos, "that the ship will not return under some hours. The rain is ceasing, but the wind is rising. This island is so encompassed by reefs that the ship will not dare to stand in too close to us until the wind changes."

"And that may not be for days," said Mr. Gray.

"The interval, whether longer or shorter, is all that remains to us of safety," said the doctor. "The convicts will pounce upon us, sooner or later, and we can do nothing to help ourselves."

"The convicts will kill all of us," said Lord Strathmore, with a shudder. "Good Heavens! Chandos, can't you think of any way of escape? You are always so ready with suggestions—have you none to offer now?"

"Yes," said Chandos, "I have a suggestion to offer. This island is barren and desolate. Snows will soon fall and render our existence here intolerable—in case our enemies spare our lives. I propose that we take again to the boat and the high seas."

His companions looked at each other blankly, and in dead silence.

"I thought the matter over while I cooked the breakfast," continued our hero. "We can fill our kegs with fresh water. We can cook a supply of food sufficient for a month's voyage. When the wind changes we can slip out of our little harbor at night, and sail to the northward. In any event, we shall be no worse off at sea than here, and the chances are that we may be picked up by some vessel. As we are now, we are like rats in a trap. If we wait here too long, the convicts will seize us, and put us to death. Our only hope is in flight."

The idea was startling to Chandos's companions. Their recent sufferings on the small boat were yet fresh in their minds, but the choice was between two great evils, and they naturally chose the lesser.

"We will go," said the doctor. "Nothing can be worse for us than to remain here."

"True," said the baron, gloomily. "It may be well that we are driven out of this refuge, for no help could ever reach us here. The sooner we are off the better."

"We must obtain our supply of food at once," said Chandos. "You must all contribute assistance. We have a few hours of safety; let us employ it to the best advantage. Mr. Gray and I will kill seals and cut up the meat for cooking. Lord Strathmore will hunt penguins' eggs for roasting, and help fill the kegs with water. The doctor and Mr. Pelham might officiate as cooks. By night, everything should be in readiness for our start."

This programme met with favor, and was entered upon at once. The rain was still falling, but in a thin mist, a fine drizzle, that promised a speedy termination. The sky was clearing; the wind was increasing. Chandos and Mr. Gray went over to the western shore of the island, and entered upon their work of killing seals. Lord Strathmore devoted himself to the task assigned him. The doctor employed his energies in collecting wood, as nearly dry as possible, and in great quantity.

Hearing the sounds of activity, Mr. Pelham came forth from his daughter's hut. The doctor informed him of the situation of affairs, and pressed him into service.

About noon the rain entirely ceased, and the sky cleared, a few sickly rays of sunshine making their appearance. The wind still blew steadily from the northward, to the great joy of those upon the island. Miss Pelham came out to the fire, which was now blazing brightly, and her father informed her of their renewed danger at the hands of the convicts. She bore the news bravely, and approved of the resolution to take to flight.

Lord Strathmore succeeded in obtaining a large number of penguins' eggs which were roasted in hot ashes. The kegs were filled with fresh water, and duly stored in the boat. A little after noon, Mr. Gray entered the camp, loaded with choice pieces of seal-meat, and these were put to roast upon the fire. Some two or three hours later, Chandos made his appearance, bearing also pieces of seal, a string of fine fish, and a bundle of roots.

These were all cooked upon the coals, or in the hot ashes, the fish being first wrapped in leaves. The *Clytemnestra* was nowhere in sight, but the wind was shifting to the opposite point of the compass, and her return could not long be delayed.

"We are all ready for the voyage," said Chandos, when supper had been eaten, and the food, all cooked, had been stowed in the boat's lockers. "We will have a favorable wind. Darkness will soon fall. We had better take advantage of its earliest shadows to escape."

Every one was feverishly eager to depart. The darkness presently gathered over the lonely isle and the vast surrounding sea. Everything was in readiness for departure; Miss Pelham was helped into the boat; her father, the doctor and the baron entered; Mr. Gray came next; Chandos pushed off the little craft and sprang in at the last moment, giving her an impetus that sent her shooting out upon the water.

Mr. Gray and Chandos rowed out of the little harbor into the sea beyond. The *Clytemnestra* was not in sight. In truth, she was ten miles to the southward, slowly beating her way back to the island, yet afraid to venture too near its outlying reefs in the night.

The convicts on board the ship were in fine spirits. They had been chagrined and troubled at the escape of the passengers of the ship, and deemed the death of the fugitives necessary to their own safety and well-being. Parson Jim was exultant in the prospect of taking Miss Pelham captive, and now walked the deck in triumph.

"We can't approach too near the island tonight," he said to one of his allies, "on account of the ugly breakers, but in the morning we'll lower two of the boats and swoop down upon them like a tornado. They're on the island, sure enough. The wind must have brought them straight to it. We haven't cruised all this time in search of them for nothing."

"But they may not be on the island, after all," suggested his ally. "We haint seen nothing of no one."

"Jest wait till morning, and you'll see something then. I know they are there. We'll find them waiting for us in the morning, the Lord Governor-General, our fellow-convict, curse him! and all, including Miss Pelham, the sweet little beauty," declared Parson Jim. "We'll kill the men. You all understand that, you know. They're all waiting for us, and they'll see us in the morning."

When morning dawned upon the waters, the ship was about five miles distant from the island. The wind had veered to the southward and was blowing steadily. The vessel stood in for the island, guided by the tall peak. Arrived as near to the reefs as prudence would permit, the ship came to anchor, and two boats were lowered. Parson Jim and a dozen fellow-convicts, armed to the teeth, sprang into the first of these, and pulled for the little harbor. The second boat was filled, and followed swiftly.

Parson Jim was the first to spring out upon the beach. He did not notice the absence of the fugitives' boat, his eyes being riveted upon the huts and the remains of the previous day's extensive fires.

"There's proof of their presence here," he exclaimed. "They've retreated to the huts. Come on boys! Let's drag 'em out!"

Investigation proved that the huts were deserted.

"They've gone to some other part of the island," cried Parson Jim, disappointedly. "We'll scour the whole place, if necessary. Their boat may be on the other side. Let's look for it!"

Half a day was spent in searching the island. At a late hour of the afternoon, Parson Jim and his confederates came to the conclusion that the fugitives had taken to their boat and were adrift.

"We will soon run them down," declared the leader of the convicts. "They can't escape us. We must get back to the ship and pursue them."

They retured to the vessel and set out in swift pursuit.

Meantime, the small boat had had a night and the larger share of the day in advance of the pursuer. The wind had changed once or twice, and the boat, under her fullest spread of canvas, had skimmed the waters like a duck.

We need not dwell upon the small incidents of this second voyage. The little boat flew on to the northward and eastward, impelled by a strong wind, and day after day passed and nothing was seen of the pursuing ship. There was no storm to threaten them with sudden death. The days were pleasant and full of sunshine; the nights were full of mellow starlight. A week passed, and yet no sail was seen. The horrible monotony wore upon the fugitives. They were silent and depressed. As upon the previous voyage, Chandos was the leading spirit of the company. He had compelled the respect of even Mr. Gray, and, consequently, Lord Strathmore hated him more than ever with a deadly and terrible hatred. He had succeeded in his machinations against his innocent cousin, had stripped him of home, friends, wealth, rank, and position; had made him a convict sentenced to hard labor for life, and yet, in spite of all, Chandos's natural nobility of character rose triumphant over all misfortune, and compelled the respect of people who would fain have treated him with contempt.

A second week followed the first, and still no sail was visible.

It seemed to the hapless voyagers that they were alone in a great water-world—the sole living denizens of a trackless, limitless waste—and that they must sail on, the sport of the winds and the waves, until starvation or some merciful storm should bring them a rest in the great deep.

The skies seemed to mock them with a brazen sun by day, and pitiless, cold starshine by night. The wind seemed to moan a dirge, and the glassy, treacherous sea seemed always yawning as their grave. Sharks followed their frail craft day after day, until the least superstitious person on board became infected with expectation of death. Day after day, the Death-angel appeared to hover over the boat, as in expectation of prey, and so the third week wore on to its end.

Three weeks of death in life, of terrible monotony, of brooding over their fate. Lord Strathmore sat sullen and troubled through the long days, yet arousing himself, now and then, to proffer such small courtesies to Miss Pelham as resources permitted. Chandos was grave and thoughtful, always on the lookout, brave and unselfish as ever, finding relief from his thoughts in hardest work. Miss Pelham was the soul of the little company. With tender womanliness and devotion, she cheered her companions. She sang to them; she told stories. She forgot her own anxieties in combating theirs. She proved herself noble, brave, and sweet, a very heroine, and her father was comforted, thinking that she did not realize the horrors of the situation. Both Lord Strathmore and Chandos knew better than this, and both felt their love for the girl increase to an overwhelming passion.

With the aid of the blanket, some little privacy had been arranged for the young lady, as upon the previous voyage. Small as was this place of retirement, it was seldom infringed upon, and it was when Miss Pelham had retired to this comparative seclusion and was asleep that her companions in misfortune ventured to talk to each other with any shade of freedom of their desperate situation.

"Three weeks at sea since leaving Pinnacle Island," said Lord Strathmore, one night, when Miss Pelham had fallen asleep. "How do the provisions hold out, Chandos?"

"Getting low," was the laconic response.

"Another week will see us reduced to starvation," said Mr. Gray.

"Or to the hideous alternative suggested on our voyage to Pinnacle Island," remarked the baron, grimly. "Day after day no sail. I begin to think that we are doomed."

"It is because we have a Jonah on board," said Mr. Gray, with a return of his earlier aversion to our hero, and with a grim look at Chandos.

The baron shuddered. If he had been inclined to superstition, he might have entertained the same idea; but he knew that the "Jonah on board" was himself, and no other.

"It seems to me," said the doctor, despondently, "that we are doomed to sail on forever, like the Flying Dutchman. I am beginning to give up all hope."

"We shall die, one by one," said Mr. Pelham. "Pray God that the weakest may go first," and he glanced in the direction of his daughter. "I could not bear that my child should survive me."

Chandos looked upward at the mocking stars. He was willing to die. Life held for him only disgrace, humiliation, sorrow and agony, he thought. If God, in His infinite mercy, would let him die now, he would be grateful. But even he shuddered at the possibility of Gerda's death. She, in her bright young beauty, to perish by starvation—the thought was too horrible—he could not bear it.

The men became again silent, gloomy, and thoughtful. The old doctor, his face thin and wan in the faint light, his long gray hair disheveled, was the first to drop asleep. Mr. Pelham next slumbered. Lord Strathmore sat awake until midnight. His swarthy face was gaunt and grim; his black eyes, looking unusually large, burned like lamps in their cavernous sockets; his thin lips were bloodless and tightly closed. He was hungry, as were all on board. The pangs of starvation were necessary to reconcile them to their hard fare. Their cooked meat was distasteful and strong of odor, and its repetition, day after day, without change, had become intolerable.

It was Mr. Gray's watch during the earlier half of the night. Chandos threw himself in the bottom of the boat and went to sleep. The gleam of starlight fell upon his noble, clear-cut features, worn and haggard with mental pain; but there was a grim patience, a strange sternness stamped upon that half-haughty face that indicated a strength and endurance of soul, for which Lord Strathmore had never given him credit.

"Curse him!" thought the baron. "He is a convict, sentenced to hard labor for life, and yet he does not look crushed. It is impossible to crush him, I believe. I wish he was dead. If this starvation continues much longer he will be the first to die. And if he lives, if we ever get to Australia he shall be driven to suicide—a million curses on him!"

With pleasant thoughts like these, the baron fell asleep.

At midnight Mr. Gray awakened our hero and took his place in the bottom of the boat, while Chandos remained in charge.

Hour after hour, the young man sat at his post, sleepless and vigilant, with strange thoughts crowding upon his mind. It seemed to him that a change was at hand. Whether the change would be wrought by death or circumstance, he did not attempt to surmise. His keen, steel-blue eyes swept the watery waste in frequent glances. He fancied he could see the sharks in close pursuit, still hungrily gaping for their prey. But otherwise, there was no sign of life upon the restless, white-capped sea, beside their own boat.

Hour after hour passed. The air grew colder. The hour that precedes the dawn was dark and gloomy. The boat sped on before the wind, Chandos's hand resting lightly on the helm. With the first gleam of the new day he resumed his searching gaze at the horizon.

His companions slept later than usual upon this morning. When they awakened, the sun was shining. Something of its brightness seemed transferred to Chandos's face. He stood upright, and was gazing to the westward with flaming eyes. They stared at him, amazed.

"What's up?" asked Lord Strathmore. "Have you gone mad, Chandos?"

Our hero silently pointed toward the west.

Their eyes turned in the direction indicated.

A sail was seen distinctly against the horizon—a white and glimmering sail that each one feared was but the phantasm of fevered brains.

"A sail!" said Mr. Pelham, hollowly. "The *Clytemnestra!*"

"Impossible!" replied Chandos, finding voice. "We are rid of her forever!"

"How shall we signal her?" cried the baron, eagerly.

"She cannot help seeing our sail," said Chandos. "We are directly in her course. Her lookout must soon discover us."

Mr. Pelham sank down and sobbed like a child.

Gerda turned from the ship to look at her unfortunate lover.

The brightness had faded from his face; the sternness had deepened in every line and feature. He was very pale, and the girl knew of what he was thinking. Rescue from death meant for him a death in life. She drew nearer to him unobserved in the general excitement, and slipped her hand in his.

"It will all be right, Ralph," she whispered, lovingly. "Trust in God, my poor boy, and in me."

With a steady hand upon the tiller Ralph Chandos guided the little craft toward the rescue that was his doom. His companions, with the exception of Gerda, who kept close beside him, stood upon the seats and waved their hands in half-delirious excitement.

"Will she see us?" groaned Mr. Pelham. "How swiftly she bears down upon us! Oh, will she pass us by?"

The question was presently answered, and in the negative. A sudden stir upon the deck of the ship, a sudden thronging forward of her crew, showed that the small boat had been seen. The long agony was over. Help and rescue had come!

CHAPTER XVI.

PORT JACKSON.

The rescuing ship proved to be the *Duke of Wellington*, convict-transport, bound from London to Sidney. She had some thirty women on board, with no male convicts. She hove to, and picked up the small boat and its occupants. The latter clambered to her deck with difficulty, being weak and cramped from insufficient diet and exercise. Miss Pelham was passed up first, Lord Strathmore closely following her. The captain and officers of the *Duke of Wellington* thronged around the haggard waifs they had picked up, full of wonder and curiosity at the singular spectacle they presented.

Lord Strathmore, by common and tacit consent of his companions, was spokesman of the party. He had betrayed no cowardly terrors during his recent sufferings, but had been moody, reserved, and grim of visage. Now he assumed an air of condescension and authority befitting his high rank and station. He swelled with importance. He felt himself every inch Lord of Strathmore in England, and Governor-General of Australia. He announced himself with proper pride and solemnity, and his auditors received the announcement with proper amazement and satisfaction.

"This young lady is Miss Pelham," he declared, indicating her. "This is her father, Mr. William Pelham, the eminent city banker, and my especial friend. We were on our way to Sidney in the ship *Clytemnestra*, with a hundred and eighty convicts on board. The convicts arose and mastered the soldiers and crew, and we barely escaped with our lives in the general confusion. We are starved, and in need of your best offices."

"The ship is at your disposal, my lord," said the captain, politely. "Anything we can do for you and your friends we shall be glad to do. Will you descend to the cabin?"

The ship was already under weigh again. Lord Strathmore inclined his head in assent, and took a step in the direction of the cabin. Suddenly, he paused and looked around, his gaze falling upon his hated cousin. Chandos, in spite of his unkempt and unshaven appearance, in spite of his haggardness and his worn garments, looked like an ideal young prince—straight and tall and stalwart, with a haughty poise of his head, his long blonde locks glittering in the sunshine, his light moustache, filled with tangled sunbeams, shadowing a mouth at once stern as that of an accusing angel's, yet tender as a woman's.

The captain's gaze followed that of Lord Strathmore, and he bowed low to this splendid young fellow, who looked to him like a knight of chivalry, such as he had read of in romances in his boyish days.

"Look to that man, Captain," said Lord Strathmore, in a harsh and discordant voice. "He is a convict—one of the one hundred and eighty on board of the *Clytemnestra*."

The captain recoiled a step with an incredulous stare.

"For shame, my lord!" said Gerda Pelham, her eyes glowing with indignation. "He saved our lives at the risk of his own. But for him not one of us would ever have left the *Clytemnestra* alive! He has preserved our lives all these weeks by the continual exercise of downright heroism. We owe to him everything—everything—"

"Gerda!" interposed her father, nervously.

"Do not reprove your daughter, my dear friend," said Lord Strathmore, smoothly. "Her enthusiasm does credit to her warm heart and to her sense of gratitude. We do owe Chandos a great deal—I acknowledge it—but hardly so much as Miss Pelham thinks. I see in him no hero, but a convict bent on saving his own life, and who saved ours incidentally to his main purpose. But, whatever my private feelings, I must consider my public duty. The eyes of England are upon me. As an official of the government of my country, it is necessary that I should be impartial. It behooves me to be a very Brutus. Captain, I shall hold you responsible for the safe-keeping of the young man."

He resumed his course toward the cabin, but the others of the party did not move.

"Captain," said the old ship's doctor, gravely, "this young gentleman is our preserver and benefactor. I must beg you to treat him with consideration until we reach Sidney. He is no ordinary convict, and I sincerely believe him to be innocent of any crime against the laws."

"The Governor-General, Lord Strathmore, could not, consistently with his duty to the government, take any other stand in regard to this unhappy young man than he has done," said Mr. Pelham, with simple dignity; "but I think he should be treated with kindness, Captain, for his devotion to us, and I join my entreaties to those of Doctor Marsh. It is only fair for me to say, however," he added, "that I differ from the doctor in believing Mr. Chandos innocent of crime."

"The young man shall be taken good care of," said the captain, forming his opinion of Chandos by the manner of Lord Strathmore. "You may go forward," and he addressed our hero. "Here, you, Tompkins, you look after this young man, and get him something to eat. Now, my lord, this way to the cabin."

He conducted his guests thither.

The cabin was no luxurious room, being plain in the extreme, with a stationary table, and with a divan running about the walls. It was clean, and looked to the weary voyagers a very haven of rest and safety.

"We'll have a breakfast for you directly, my lord," said the captain, after introducing himself as Captain Hawarden; "and, in the meantime, if you'll make your toilet, my room is at your service."

Lord Strathmore acknowledged this politeness by a bow.

The captain opened the door of a stateroom near at hand.

"Miss Pelham," he said, "this room is at your service. I will have the steward make up the berth with fresh linen while you are at breakfast. This is the first officer's room, and he will be happy to turn out for a lady. You will find clean towels and soap and water in readiness for use. I will bring you a new comb and brush immediately. I am only sorry that I have no stewardess to attend upon you."

Miss Pelham expressed her thanks, and retired into the room assigned her, closing the door.

Her father and the doctor were next provided for, with lodgings quite near to her.

The captain brought clean linen from his own stores and those of his officers, and supplied the gentlemen. Clothes-brushes were brought into requisition, and old and worn garments were brushed and shaken into cleanliness and respectability.

Miss Pelham secured her door and took a thorough bath, feeling thereby greatly refreshed. She was nearly dressed when the captain knocked at her door, and informed her that he had found some clean linen for her among the stores of the convicts, and begged her acceptance of it. When he had departed, she opened her door and took in the things he had brought. The linen proved to be coarse and ill-made, but it was clean, and the young lady accepted it with gratitude. The comb and brush restored her disheveled locks to glossy smoothness. Her black gown was yet whole and decent. A white pocket-handkerchief—one of the captain's—tied about her neck, supplied the lack of a collar. Her toilet thus renovated, she re-entered the cabin.

Breakfast was upon the table; steaming coffee, bacon and eggs, potted meats, new bread and ship's biscuit, made up a repast that seemed to the new arrivals fit for a Sybarite.

Lord Strathmore came forward and offered his arm to Miss Pelham to lead her to the table. She declined the proffered assistance with a coldness that startled him. He feared lest, in his enmity to his cousin, he had gone too far.

"My dear Miss Pelham," he pleaded, in an undertone, "do not be angry with me. How could I do differently in regard to Chandos? Do you suppose that I do not feel the disgrace of the connection, and that I would not assist his escape if I could? But duty, to a public man, is a stern word. I cannot betray the trust reposed in me. Believing Chandos guilty, I dare not tamper with my conscience, or my duty, so far as to show him favor. If I lose your esteem, Miss Pelham, by my adherence to duty, then I am, indeed, the most miserable of men."

The hypocrite infused so much of seeming sincerity and passionate earnestness into his tones, that one more gifted with insight into human nature than innocent Gerda might well have been imposed upon. Mr. Pelham had heard every word, as he stood near, and he held out his hand to Lord Strathmore, exclaiming warmly:

"You do well, Strathmore, to adhere to your principles of right. We understand your natural desire to shield your unhappy cousin, and to favor him. We respect you all the more for your strict adherence to duty. Gerda is not offended with you. How could she be? Whatever Chandos was to her in the past, he is less than nothing now. Gerda has sense to realize that the young man is only a convict, condemned to transportation with hard labor for life. There is a gulf fixed between them which even the most romantic and hare-brained girl in existence could never hope or desire to cross."

There was an anxious look in his eyes that touched his daughter. She took his arm in silence, and was conducted to the table. While she ate her breakfast, she did some hard thinking, the result of which was a resolution to treat Lord Strathmore with uniform courtesy thereafter, not only because an opposite course would offend her father, but for other reasons which seemed to her ample and imperative.

"I am growing to dislike him extremely," she thought, "but for papa's sake, and for Ralph's sake, I must conceal my aversion. He certainly hates Ralph. He is the one—the only one—who has profited by old Lord Strathmore's murder. I sometimes think—"

A shudder completed the sentence.

After breakfast, she begged Dr. Marsh to look after the welfare of Chandos. The good doctor hastened to comply with her request, finding Chandos in the forecastle, supplied with clean linen, comfortably fed, and lodged among the sailors. His bearing and looks proclaimed him an aristocrat, and they had received him coolly, but his genial smile and friendly ways had won upon them all, and, in spite of the stigma attached to him, the seamen were inclined to make much of him.

The doctor spent some hours with his young friend, and returned to the cabin in time for dinner. After that meal he gave his arm to Miss Pelham and walked with her upon the deck, relating to her the substance of his recent interview with Chandos, and avowing to her again his belief in the young man's innocence.

"I was never more deeply interested in any man in my life," he exclaimed. "I am alone in the world, Miss Pelham, and I have employed myself as a ship-doctor merely to satisfy my own restlessness and desire for continual change. I have a little money, enough to keep me simply as long as I live. I believe Mr. Chandos to be the victim of some base conspiracy, and I intend to stop a while out in Sidney to look after him. I have lost my post with the ship, and I shall not apply for another just at present."

"If anything could be done to spare him the indignities usually visited upon convicts," said Miss Pelham, "I would bless and honor you while I live, Doctor Marsh. Ralph Chandos is innocent of his uncle's murder, and some day his innocence will be proved. God grant that day arrive before he is broken in spirit, and made desperate by oppression."

"I will do all I can to help him, Miss Pelham; but, unless the Governor-General should show some leniency, what can I do? The young man's fate will be very hard, if Lord Strathmore chooses to make it so," sighed Dr. Marsh. "You alone, my dear young lady, have any influence with his lordship. If you exercise your influence in Chandos's behalf, the horrors of his lot may be mitigated—not otherwise."

The girl flushed, then paled. Lord Strathmore had never, in so many words, avowed himself her suitor, but her woman's intuitions had told her that he loved her, and she knew well that any mitigation of her lover's lot was to be obtained only at the price of her hand.

The doctor sighed again, interpreting her silence aright. The future looked very dark for Chandos, and he could see no gleam of light anywhere for the poor young fellow.

A few days of rest and comfortable fare, of relief from torturing anxieties, restored the fugitives of the *Clytemnestra* to some semblance of their former selves. Chandos remained in the forecastle, visited daily by Dr. Marsh and Mr. Gray, and now and then seeing from afar the eyes of the girl he loved looking upon him with tenderness and yearning that thrilled him through and through. That lovely, faithful face, full of unswerving fidelity, was to him a star of hope and promise. At night, in his lonely bunk, it seemed to shine upon him out of the darkness like the face of an angel. He could not utterly despair so long as this one true heart clung to him and shared his griefs, mourned over him, and besieged Heaven daily with prayers in his behalf.

The *Duke of Wellington* was a good sailer. In a week's time she drew near her destination. Upon the morning of the seventh day after the rescue of Lord Strathmore's party, there was great excitement on board, a blue line against the horizon indicating land. This blue line, on nearer approach, developed into a great wall of rock, destitute of trees. The wind had shifted to the north-east, assisting materially the approach of the *Wellington*. The size and grandeur of the cliffs were now apparent. The two heads of Port Jackson became perceptible, although the passage between them was not yet plainly indicated, the third, or Middle Head, appearing in the opening.

The *Wellington*, having taken on board a pilot, who came out in a small boat, in due time rounded the towering North Head, and entered Port Jackson, sailing between the opposite lines of cliffs, which formed immense buttresses to the right and to the left.

The scene, to English eyes, was very striking.

The sandstone rocks on the shore jutting out into the water, the strange trees, the gums, with their light gray trunks predominating, the green grass, the shrubs, and all the peculiarities of the Australian landscape were scanned with eager eyes.

Lord Strathmore's bosom swelled as he gazed upon the land over which he had come to rule. He was the representative of his sovereign, and therefore virtually monarch of this great southern continent. He felt himself a king as he surveyed his new empire. His ambition was at last gratified. He felt that his life was a success, that his scheming and sinning had brought him the result at which he had aimed.

As he thus exulted, saying to himself that only one thing more remained to be desired, and that one thing was possession of Gerda Pelham, the girl approached him and stood at his side.

He turned to her, his face beaming.

"After all our perils, we are arrived at Sidney safely," he exclaimed. "Let us congratulate each other, Miss Gerda."

Miss Pelham glanced in the direction of the forecastle.

"I wish to speak to you of Ralph Chandos, Baron," she said, bravely, although her lips quivered, and there were tears in the sweet, fearless eyes upraised to his. "I do not ask you to prove false to your ideas of duty, but I do ask you to spare him all indignities, such as the prison and hard labor. The very fact that he is a convict is a torture to him. Do not let it be added to by unnecessary cruelty, I beseech you."

"Miss Pelham," said the Governor-General, gallantly, "whatever I can do for Chandos shall be done for your sake."

The girl turned away, struck by the concluding words of his sentence, yet feeling lighter at heart.

It was well for her that she did not see the fiendish smile on his swarthy visage as he again looked shoreward, else her soul might have died within her. It was well she could not read his cruelly exultant heart, as he said to himself:

"I will take care of Ralph Chandos, Miss Gerda; never fear I shall forget him. I will take care to visit upon him every horror known to convict life. I will humble his spirit, gall his soul to the quick, and drive him to the very depths of despair. And, finally, he shall die, and not even his ghost shall give me cause for jealousy. Yet I will play a double part. I will make the girl marry me to save him from some awful fate, and then, when she is irrevocably mine, I will procure his death. So much success has made me bold!" and he smiled like a demon.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SHINING IN BORROWED JEWELS.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

"Oh, Hilda, dear, do lend them to me," sighed Mrs. Rose. Though she *was* Mrs. Rose she was only eighteen, and she stood staring at a splendid set of diamonds—bracelets, ear-rings, necklace, pin, and finger-ring—that lay in a blue velvet case before her. "I know it is the most impudent thing—'cheeky,' Tom would call it; but we are own cousins, and you'll have them always, and I only want to wear them to Miss Follingsby's wedding. I've a black silk, with a train and nice lace, but only my corals; and they dress like queens, this Follingsby lot. Do, dear."

"Well, I'm sure I'd do anything to please you, Lotty," said the other woman. "You know they are all the fortune I have. I shall sell them. We can buy a little home, and have something left over, if I get the price Sparkle & Shine promise me for the stones. Here, put them on. Well, you *do* sparkle, to be sure."

"Oh, thank you, thank you, Hilda," exclaimed little Mrs. Rose, dancing before the glass. "Not one woman out of a thousand would be so good. I'll never, never, never forget them for one instant."

Away she went, wrapped in her great cloak, which hid the diamonds from the eyes of her waiting husband.

They hurried on, for the Follingsbys were only a few blocks off, and carriages were expensive things—too expensive for a poor clerk and his wife.

The wedding ceremony was soon over. The supper followed.

"Who is that girl in the diamond-necklace?" asked one elderly lady of another.

"That? Why that is young Mrs. Rose," replied the other. "Mr. Rose is in the bank. He is a poor young man, of course; but Mr. Follingsby thinks so much of him. He is *so* reliable—so good."

"He must have married a rich wife," replied the other old lady.

"Oh, I think not," replied Mrs. Follingsby. "She was a governess, I think."

The old lady shook her head. Her husband was an officer in the bank of which Mr. Follingsby was president. She saw him at the other end of the room, and approached him.

"A word in your ear," said she. "Have you ever discovered the secret of those mysterious robberies at the bank? I thought not. You know young Rose, don't you? There, *that* is *his* wife."

"Pretty girl," said the old gentleman.

"Pretty! That is all you think of, Mr. De Champ!" cried the old lady. "She wears the finest diamonds in the room."

"Shine as well. Shine as well as any," laughed Mr. De Champ. "Glass and brass. Ha—ha!"

"I *shall* go distracted," said Mrs. De Champ. "Why, I can detect French paste at a glance. Now, De Champ, if your clerk gives his wife—who was a poor governess—such diamonds, something is wrong."

"Yes, yes—if—but then," began the old gentleman.

But away went Mrs. De Champ. In five minutes she had obtained an introduction to Mrs. Rose, and had carried her away into the conservatory to show her a rare flower.

Little Mrs. Rose, flattered by the attention, was in high spirits; and when, after some chat, Mrs. De Champ said, with a smile:

"It's really quite rude, I know, but I can't help speaking of your beautiful diamonds. Are they heir-looms?"

Temptation overcame her. She did not know enough to understand that diamonds which were heir-looms would have been things to be prouder of than recent purchases. Her whole mind was in the present. She really had worked herself into a sort of belief that the diamonds were her own—that she was rich and fashionable.

"Oh dear, no," she said with a careless air. "My husband's birth-day gift. He promises me a watch, set to match them, next Christmas."

"Indeed!" said the old lady. "He is generous. May I show the bracelet to a friend? It is quite unique. Wait here for me."

She sped away through the rooms, with the bracelet folded in her handkerchief.

"Mr. Follingsby," she said, in a whisper, "come with me where we can be alone." And the bank president followed his guest into his little study. There she laid the bracelet upon the table.

"What are these stones, Mr. Follingsby?" said she.

"The finest diamonds I ever saw," replied the bank president, who had begun life as a jeweler.

"The only sensible person yet," cried Mrs. De Champ. "Now, sir, your clerk, Mr. Rose, gave these to his wife for her birth-day present, and promises her a watch, set to match them, for a Christmas gift. Do you understand? Have you discovered the mysterious robber yet?"

Mr. Follingsby sank into a chair, and said:

"I trusted Rose as though he had been my son."

A few minutes after, young Rose said to his wife:

"I suppose every one knows you are rigged out in dollar jewelry. I feel ashamed of it."

"Oh, no matter, dear. They are very good imitations," said little Mrs. Rose.

She preferred not to mention to her husband the fact that she had borrowed such splendid jewels—especially as the old lady was long in returning.

In fact, she returned no more. Vainly did Mrs. Rose search for her. She had given the diamond bracelet to one whose name she did not even know, for she had not caught it in the introduction.

She returned home in despair, and, at breakfast-time, professed herself too sleepy to rise. Poor Rose ate his meal alone, and went down to the bank with a feeling that something was wrong.

It deepened as he obeyed a summons to enter the president's private office, and found him standing with a grave face before the bright grate fire.

"Rose," began Mr. Follingsby, "I knew your father and loved him. I have loved you. I have trusted you. You have betrayed that trust. Even now, I cannot have the heart to punish you as you deserve. Return your spoils, and a dismissal will be your only penalty—that and the wounds which your conscience must give you."

"Sir!" cried young Rose. "I do not comprehend— I—dishonest—I—"

"You should not have allowed your wife to appear in those diamonds," said Mr. Follingsby.

Rose actually laughed.

"Is that it?" said he. "Poor Lotty, her glass jewels *were* good imitations, then?"

"You forget, sir," said Mr. Follingsby, "I have the bracelet. I never saw finer diamonds; and since you intend to give her a watch, set with the same jewels, for a Christmas gift—"

"Mr. Follingsby, am I mad, or are you?" cried young Rose.

"You, I fear," said Mr. Follingsby. "Come, Rose, confession will better avail you than denial. God knows, I pity you. Doubtless, you were tempted. But I must see to the interests of the bank, while I stretch a point to save you from the worst. Here is the bracelet," and he drew it from his breast.

"I am unable to comprehend," gasped Rose; but at that moment the door burst open, and in rushed Mrs. Loutrel.

"I have found you both together, Mr. Follingsby and Mr. Rose," said she. "They tried to keep me out, but I *would* come in. One of your guests stole my bracelet from Mrs. Rose, Mr. Follingsby. I have no husband in the bank. I'm not afraid of you. I will have her name. An old lady, with white puffs of hair and ruby ornaments—a fat old lady. Oh, what a fool I was to lend that silly Lotty my whole little fortune to glitter and shine in for a night! Left me by poor grandma, Mr. Follingsby; and we are going to sell them and buy a house. And your wife told you they were glass, Mr. Rose. Oh, she is such a silly thing; always was. Can't I have the old lady arrested, Mr. Follingsby. Give me her name—do, please."

"Madam," said Mr. Follingsby, "your bracelet will be returned, if it *is* yours. Can you prove property?"

"Grandma's will, and the lawyers, and Ben, and the rest of the set, and everything," cried Mrs. Loutrel. "Of course I can. Is there any hope of getting it back?"

For answer, Mr. Follingsby dropped the bracelet into her hand.

"Go home and comfort your poor, silly little friend," said he. "And you, Rose, forgive me. I should have lost my trust in human nature, if what I thought of you had proved true."

"What did you think?" asked Mrs. Loutrel. "Nothing wrong, I hope. Cousin Lotty never even told him she had borrowed the jewels, and I'm sure I beg pardon for my excitement, and all that, and I'll run to Lotty right away."

Mr. Follingsby opened the door with a bow, and the two men were left together. It is not often that a bank president apologizes to his clerk, but it happened this time, at least.

At home that night, Tom Rose found a penitent little wife with swollen eyes, whom he kissed into smiles again. All had ended well, but Lotty had had a lesson. She would never again desire to shine in borrowed jewels.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1878.

WE always stop the LEDGER at the expiration of the year, or of the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue it, it would be well to renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires.

WE CANNOT change the address of a subscriber, unless he gives us his *former* as well as his present address.

REJECTED MANUSCRIPTS.—We will not return rejected manuscripts.

The Matrimonial Market.

We read the above title to an article in one of our highly respectable daily journals, a few days ago. The thought occurred to us, Is there really any such thing, in this country, as a matrimonial market?

Strictly speaking, there is not. American daughters are not sold, like the beautiful Circassian girls, to the highest bidder. Yet, after all, it cannot be denied that the disposal, in marriage, of many young ladies, partakes very largely of the nature of a matrimonial market. Love, congeniality, happiness—these are secondary considerations; money stands before them all.

Of course, this principle of disposing of daughters prevails only among the ambitious, the selfish, the worldly-minded; but in fashionable society there are a good many of these.

One secret of the numerous infidelities in married life, and of the terrible experiences revealed in divorce suits, may be found in the fact that the hand is so often given in marriage without the heart—that, indeed, the hand is so often given to one when the heart had already been previously given to another.

A matrimonial market must necessarily be a market in which, whatever the nominal terms may be, a future of disappointment and woe are in reality contracted for.

Woman Suffrage—A Suggestion for the Benefit of the Babies.

It was very gallant in Senator HOAR, of Massachusetts, Chairman of the Committee on Privileges and Elections of the United States Senate, before whom the lady delegates recently appeared, at Washington, to advocate female suffrage, to offer a resolution to the effect that the addresses by the ladies had been characterized by dignity, fairness, eloquence and power. The Committee adopted the resolution, and we judge by the speeches that the compliment was merited.

How would it do, if female suffrage were to be established, to provide that women and men should vote alternate years? We make the suggestion for the benefit of the babies, so that when the women should be absent at the polls the men might remain at home to rock the cradle.

The late Mr. GREELEY used to maintain that women did not really want to vote; a very few might, but women in general did not. We are half inclined to think that he was right, for women so universally have their way, we are disposed to believe that if they had cared much about voting, the privilege would have been extended to them long ago.

The Ravages of Diphtheria.

The *Post*, published at Rochester, Minnesota, referring to an afflicted family in that city, says:

"Elsewhere we publish the death of the eldest daughter of the family, which occurred on Friday night of last week. Within the past two days, three more of the family—all little girls, under the age of twelve years—have followed their sister into the unknown.

"There were ten children in the family, and the remaining six, together with the afflicted mother, are all down with the same disease—diphtheria—of which the four died."

Diphtheria is by some attributed to imperfect sewage and drainage. Whatever the cause may be, it is to be hoped that it will, ere long, become known for a certainty, together with some preventive or remedy, for many a household is now made desolate by this dreaded visitor.

Acquitted, but not Discharged.

Three tramps were tried, a few days ago, in Pennsylvania, for forcibly entering a station-house on a railroad, and retaining possession of it. The evidence was insufficient to maintain the charge, and they were acquitted.

The judge holding the court, however, expressed the opinion that though this particular accusation was not proved, he still thought them dangerous characters, and required them to find bail in the sum of five hundred dollars to keep the peace for different periods of time, from two years and eight months to two years and ten months. Bail in this amount they were unable to furnish, so they bid fair, after their acquittal, to be imprisoned about as long as they would have been if they had been convicted.

Unfortunate.

We wish the persons who managed the Charter Oak Insurance Company, of Hartford, Connecticut, might have called it by some other name.

We have not, in this young country, too many proud local historical reminiscences, and what we have should be sacredly preserved. The giving of the grand old name of Charter Oak to such a company, if half of what we hear be true, was, to say the least, unfortunate.

"Caught"—A Coincidence.

Mr. WILLIAM C. GILMAN, formerly a highly esteemed broker in insurance scrip, was recently detected in numerous frauds, tried, convicted, and sentenced to the State Prison for five years. Since his fall his large collection of paintings has been sold at auction. By a singular coincidence, the name of the first picture offered happened to be "*Caught.*"

Bulgarian Gratitude.

A lady who went to Philippolis to relieve the sufferings of the destitute, was charged four times the ordinary price for the rent of a house, and six times the ordinary hire for pack-horses to carry her goods intended for free distribution!

She might have found appreciation equal to this nearer home.

Blue Birds in Mid-Winter.

Robins have been quite plenty, in the neighborhood of New York thus far, throughout the winter, and January seventeenth blue birds were seen on Long Island, flying from tree to tree, and singing as sweetly as in May.

WORDS.

BY REV. JOHN HALL, D.D., N. Y.

(Respectfully Dedicated to Boys and Girls.)

"I gave my word," says Mr. A., "and I feel bound to keep my promise at any inconvenience."

"He sent me word," says Mr. B., "that I might depend on him, come what might; I have his message."

"He gave the word," says Mr. C., "and, of course, all started at the appointed signal."

"We had some words," says D., referring to a sharp dispute he had with his former partner.

"I am going to be married to Miss E., one of your congregation, and I came to see when you could say the words," says Farmer F., as he stands, hat in hand, looking rather ashamed of himself, yet with a good, manly bearing behind his blushes, in presence of English Parson G.

"He preaches the word," says Mr. H., as he winds up an impromptu testimonial to his excellent pastor, and he—the pastor—reverently tells his people, as he expounds the Scriptures, of the "Word made flesh," and how, as our words reveal the intentions of the unseen mind within, so the Incarnate Word reveals the will of the Invisible One.

The use of words is the exclusive privilege of man among terrestrial creatures. Men can write words and make books, and the next wonderful thing in the world to a man is his book. Indeed, a man can live and labor on in his book, when his body has ceased to enshrine a spirit. Plato, Bacon, Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, Thiers, and, in a field higher than theirs, Paul—how much of these men lives in their words! So in our own small allowance of time and space, how much a man can extend himself by his words! The editor of a morning paper is, let us hope, getting into a healthy sleep about seven or eight o'clock, A. M.; but what a small part of him is in bed! He is in a thousand houses in the city, and in motion by every railway that leaves it, and will keep travelling, talking, imparting ideas over all the neighboring States, one cannot tell for how long. Is it any wonder that the press has such a fascination for active, self-asserting minds? That is a true and not bad instinct that expressed itself in a child, who stood up at a relative's wedding and was duly put in the paper: "Many a time I wished to see my name in the paper, and it has come at last. I'm so glad!"

But words are only representatives—greenbacks; behind which there ought to be the coin of thought, feeling, intelligence. One can get a sum of money in a single note, or in a pocketful of smaller bills, or coins. And as in the coins and notes of the various lands, so it is with the words; in some there is more beauty, greater artistic elegance, than in others. But beauty is not the first thing, only the second. A note may have a dirty, yellow-blue look, like a section of a wilted cabbage-leaf, but it is good at the bank for its face-value. Or it may be crisp, clean and artistic, but they will take off forty-five per cent. of its face value in paying you. So with words; and our preference is for the words—however homely—that are true wholly. Fine words only partially true are a depreciated currency.

Men are sometimes extravagant in words as in currency. Here is the way in which diffuse, charming, opium-eating De Quincey ordered the Scotch cook to give him a bit of mutton from the loin:

"Owing to dyspepsia afflicting my system, and the possibility of any additional disarrangement of the stomach taking place, consequences incalculably distressing would arise—so much so, indeed, as to increase nervous irritation, and prevent me from attending to matters of overwhelming importance—if you do not remember to cut the mutton in a diagonal, rather than a longitudinal, form." No wonder that the cook, to whom he spoke as deferentially as to a duchess, said: "The body has an awfu' sicht o' words. Mr. De Quinshey would mak' a gran' preacher, though I'm thinking a hantle o' the folk wouldna ken what he was driving at."

The telegraph and the general hurry of our time repress this wordiness in a degree, unless where men are paid for speaking by the hour, as Coleridge undertook to write poetry for Cottle, the Bristol bookseller, at a guinea and a half the hundred lines. Even the famous "England expects every man to do his duty," would have been longer and weaker but for considerations of dispatch. Lord Nelson had "confides that;" but "confides" was not in the signal-list, and "expects" was; and so Mr. Pasco had leave to put "expects," to save spelling out "confides," for his lordship was in haste to signal "ready for close action."

Commonly, men get words for their ideas; but sometimes the word has ideas found for it. The word for a sieve, through which flour was sifted, is in provincial English, *temse*, (in one syllable, *tems*). A hard-working man moves the temse so rapidly over the barrel-top that the friction sets it on fire. One of the other sort does not. Hence it was said, "he won't set the temse on fire." But in cities Englishmen did not know the *temse*; but they knew the Thames river, and the word made good sense, and they took it, and said, "he won't set the Thames on fire;" and now Irishmen say, "he won't set the Liffey," and New Yorkers, "the Hudson," and I suppose our Western friends, "the Mississippi, on fire."

As with coins, so with words; men can play with them. So when Lord Stormont was glorifying his wine for its years, Sam Foote, in allusion to the small decanter and glass, said: "It is very little of its age." We have no sympathy with the vulgar prejudice against a pun in its proper place. Only the more stupid sort of men object to it. When a noble scamp was thrown out of a window and hurt, for cheating at play, it was quite proper to tell him "not to play so high again." Of course, when such things are deliberately and painfully prepared they may be as objectionable as formal compliments. But men of genius, from Socrates to gentle, genial, egotistical Charles Lamb, have not disdained a play upon words. But then, like all play, which is only legitimate when earned by honest work, the fun is only warranted by long stretches of serious good sense. The dullest book to read through is a jest-book. If this entire *Ledger* were all like the half-column of WIT AND HUMOR on page 2, there is not a man or woman in the land who would read it through—not even the wit who is invited to supper and directed when to begin to be funny. There is great wisdom in putting in dull useful papers—like this.

Words, like money, to be valued, must have cost. To spell them, to pronounce them, to write them, to understand them, to construe them, to combine them, in composition, and to know the use of them, all this, Boys and Girls! tries you. You count them a "bore;" call them "horrid!" But be patient. You are like a poor man earning money when young, rich when he is old. He knows the value of the money, and the early savings have brought him large interest. Master the words, while you are young. Then they will not master you when you are old, but, like money, will represent values to you, serve all your lawful ends, and may even help you to reach out far beyond yourself and survive in power and usefulness the day of death. Let nothing discourage you. Demosthenes stammered at the beginning; many eloquent men lisped in their childhood; D'Israeli was laughed at for his first speech; and the most brilliant writers of the day have once spelled cat with a "k." Words are not ideas, nor things; but they are a great help to getting, and they are essential to giving, them.

DID MR. E. N. ROBINSON'S COACHMAN leave a whip behind him in the stable? If so, to what use is it put?—*N. Y. Herald.*

It is not easy to tell to what use it was put; but it is very easy to tell to what use it ought to have been put—until the man's back was well scarred.

Many Marriages.

[From the Harrisburg (Pa.) Patriot.]

There is a justice of the peace in Washington county who has married one thousand two hundred and sixty-nine couples.

ACTING FOR EFFECT.

BY BISHOP CLARK, OF RHODE ISLAND.

There is a great difference in people. This is not a new or profound saying, but it is one that is often forced upon our attention. In some cases, you see the real wood—it may be rather rough and gnarled and knotty, not of the most lovely and beauiful grain, not smoothed and polished at all, but it is the stuff of which the man is made, for the better or worse. In other cases, you never see the real wood at all, but only some thin coat of varnish veneering, in which the man has encased himself. Some persons act from the necessity of their nature, not without guidance and control, according to what they really believe and feel; others act for effect, to gratify personal vanity, or from the desire to pass themselves off for more than they are worth, or in general, because they are anxious to produce an impression. There are seven ways in which this weakness manifests itself.

I. Some affect *style*. They will make almost any sacrifice, in order to be in the fashion. They are fond of talking about their ancestors, if they happen to have any—give the cold shoulder to their poor relations—hang a blazing coat-of-arms on the parlor walls—get up the most ambitious crests and monograms—covet titles—try to sink the shop, when the shop has made them all that they are—court the best society, and perhaps give parties and dinners which they can poorly afford, and have much to say of *parvenus* and the *canaille*, and in other connections use French words in a somewhat miscellaneous manner. They buy books, for the sake of the backs, and take fashionable or scientific periodicals, which they never read. They speak of their servants, if they happen to keep more than one, as "my people"—of the hack, which they hire, as "our carriage;" the boy who scours the knives is a footman—the woman hired to do the washing is a laundress, and the teacher of the school is "my son's tutor." They go to church where the other fashionable families go, shop where they shop, and set up a tomb in the cemetery where they are buried.

II. Some affect *youth*. They labor painfully to restore the marks of a period that is fast vanishing, and to efface the marks of a period that is fast coming. They labor over their dress, padding and skimping, flowering and ribboning, and covering their gray heads with flowers and feathers and birds and butterflies, and—milliners only know what. They labor over their gait, suffering much in the effort to amble and skip and trip, as they once did, and it may be, going down the door-steps backward, to avoid toppling over. They labor over their speech, fighting against the cracked falsetto, trying to get flute-notes from a withered pipe, and mincing the words that it is so hard to articulate. O, my dear aged friends, why will you toil so hard for naught? The autumn-leaf, in its way, may be as beautiful as the rose, but you cannot change it into a flower. There is nothing to be ashamed of in growing old—all people will grow old, if they live long enough. Snakes are the only creatures that I know of, that always retain the appearance of youth, and they do it by changing their skins every year. This is what we cannot do.

III. Some, strange to say, affect *silliness*—more especially of the "female persuasion." To giggle and scream and jump about like monkeys, does not conduce to real cheerfulness. No class of human beings, old or young, make themselves attractive, by talking simple nonsense. It is not well to laugh at a thing because you don't understand it, or to ridicule a sentiment, because you don't feel it, or to despise a pursuit, because it is above you. I assume that you are not a fool, although you may try to appear like one. If you were, there would be no use in talking to you. You have brains, if you would only condescend to use them—you know something, although you pretend to be so ignorant—and you may feel deeply, even when you profess not to care. Remember, that those who laugh most heartily *with* you, when you are present, may laugh most heartily *at* you, when you are absent.

IV. Stranger still, some affect *badness*. Young men occasionally put on a swagger and assume an evil tone that does not belong to them. They boast that they are never affected by any quantity of liquor, when they are so little used to it, that a glass of wine would upset them. They know too much of the world to be ever taken in, when, in fact, they are as green as gooseberries. They speak disdainfully of virtues, which they cannot help respecting in their hearts. They are fond of being called *swells*, and the title is more appropriate than they imagine. They are not as bad as they pretend to be, but, if they keep on they will become worse than they now pretend to be.

V. Some affect *importance*. They hope to become great, by making themselves conspicuous—forgetting that you do not convert an owl into an eagle by perching him on the top of a mountain. A man may get into a big place, without being a big man. He may have a great many handles to his name, titles without number, but the bell will not sound any louder because of the size of the handle. No one can make himself great by talking about himself, or about the great people that he knows. If a man could be estimated by the value which he places upon himself, all this might pay, but the tendency is rather in the opposite direction.

VI. Some affect *wisdom*. Those who are really learned, do not usually make much parade of their learning, and the more they know, the more modest they are likely to be. But the class that I now have in mind, put all their stock in the shop-windows. It will not do to ask for any article that is not to be seen there. They quote from authors whose works they never read—the names of great writers are familiar to their lips, whom they know only through the "Dictionary of Quotations;" and they criticise freely what has been already freely criticised in the newspapers. They may fish in deep waters, but it is with a very short line. Sometimes they venture upon speculations of their own. The pagan oracles were conspicuous for their vagueness. The meaning of what they said depended upon the way in which their words were interpreted. In many instances, it was difficult to perceive that they had any meaning at all. The same characteristics exist in the speech of the pseudo-philosopher.

VII. Some affect *goodness*. Perhaps not a goodness of which they are entirely destitute, but a style of excellence above that which they actually possess. They measure their tones, with reference to the direct effect upon the listener—assume an air of solemnity more intense than they feel—take what is called a high stand on questions of reform, because the reform is popular—and denounce certain things, not because they are very averse to them, but out of regard to their own reputation. They may not be downright hypocrites, but then, on the other hand, they are not quite as saintly as they would like to be considered. A man of this sort may manage to pass for what he professes to be, or he may not; in either case, the good which he attains is no compensation for the damage he does to his own nature.

No man can be true to others who is not true to himself, and no man can be true to himself who is not true to others.

Holding on Determinedly.

The *Poughkeepsie Press* relates the particulars attending the drowning of a lad, named VAN ZYLE, in the Hudson, a few days since. He was crossing with a string of fish, when the ice gave way and let him in. A boat put off for his rescue. He held to the ice three-quarters of an hour, and never once opened his mouth to cry for help; but when he saw the boat stop, at a distance of several hundred yards, unable to approach nearer, he suddenly loosed his hold, thoroughly discouraged, and sank out of sight.

A Western Estimate of the Ledger.

[From the Edwardsville (Ill.) Republican.]

For the year just past we have derived great enjoyment and much profit from reading the New York *Ledger*. When we speak of it as the king of literary papers, we but half express our belief. It comes to us each week freighted with wholesome thoughts, choice stories, sound advice, and sweetest strains of poesy. Our national existence would be rendered better if every family circle was provided with the *Ledger*.

TROUBLES I NEED NOT HAVE.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

Hold hither your face, New Year,
Till I kiss the unguilty lips,
And look in the youthful eyes,
Ere they suffer Time's sure eclipse.
What! Never a word, New Year?
No promises glowing to me?
No glimpse at your closéd palm,
At the guerdons I cannot see?
What lies underneath the blooms
And soft-wrapping verdure of May
What centres the golden sheaf
Beside the hot midsummer day?
What safe-garnered seed lies hid
In the round of October's crown?
What hopes lie with folded hands
Where snow-flakes come hurrying down?
What purpose I hold shall fail?
What lamp I have trimmed glimmer dim?
What shadows shall shape themselves
Into substance, sombre and grim?
What songs I have loved grow dumb?
What harmonies jangle and die?
Let me peep in your palm, New Year;
Hark! echoing still: "By and by!"
Stop! I remember my creed—
To leave for the Master, His care,
And take only that which I must,
Bear what He has bidden me bear.
If I fail to see the way
Of God's purposes here, what then?
Does He bid me know it all,
With my pitiful human ken?
To me it seems wiser far
To sift out my trials, and see
That some I have borne the while,
Were never intended for me.
So I lay them on His hands,
Contented, oh New Year, to wait
For gifts in your folded palm,
And the troubles behind the gate.

LIFE ON A LOCOMOTIVE.

BY JAMES PARTON.

Literature in these days throws light into many an out-of-the-way corner. It is rapidly making us all acquainted with one another. A locomotive engineer in England has recently written a book upon his art, in order, as he says, "to communicate that species of knowledge which it is necessary for an engine-driver to possess who aspires to take high rank on the footplate!" He magnifies his office, and evidently regards the position of an engineer as highly enviable.

"It is very *natural*," he remarks, "for those who are unacquainted with locomotive driving to admire the life of an engine-man, and to imagine how very pleasant it must be to travel on the engine. But they do not think of the gradations by which alone the higher positions are reached; they see only on the express engine the picturesque side of the result of many years of patient observation and toil."

This passage was to me a revelation; for I had looked upon an engineer and his assistant with some compassion as well as admiration, and have often thought how extremely disagreeable it must be to travel on the engine as they do. Not so Michael Reynolds, the author of this book, who has risen from the rank of fireman to that of locomotive inspector on the London and Brighton railroad. He tells us that a model engineer "is possessed by a master passion—a passion for the monarch of speed." Such an engineer is distinguished, also, for his minute knowledge of the engine, and nothing makes him happier than to get some new light upon one of its numberless parts. So familiar is he with it that his ear detects the slightest variation in the beats of the machinery, and can tell the shocks and shakes which are caused by a defective road from those which are due to a defective engine. Even his nose acquires a peculiar sensitiveness. In the midst of so much heat, he can detect that which arises from friction before any mischief has been done. At every rate of speed he knows just how his engine ought to sound, shake, and smell.

Let us see how life passes on a locomotive, and what is the secret of success in the business of an engineer. The art of arts in engine driving is the management of the fire. Every reader is aware that taking care of a fire is something in which few persons become expert. Most of us think that we ourselves possess the knack of it, but not another individual of our household. Now, a man born with a genius for managing a locomotive is one who has a high degree of the fire-making instinct. Mr. Reynolds distinctly says that a man may be a good mechanic, may have even built locomotives, and yet, if he is not a good "shovel-man," if he does not know how to manage his fire, he will never rise to distinction in his profession. The great secret is to build the fire so that the whole mass of fuel will ignite and burn freely without the use of the blower, and so bring the engine to the train with a fire that will last. When we see an engine blowing off steam furiously at the beginning of the trip, we must not be surprised if the train reaches the first station behind time, since it indicates a fierce, thin fire, that has been rapidly ignited by the blower. An accomplished engineer backs his engine to the train without any sign of steam or smoke, but with a fire so strong and sound that he can make a run of fifty miles in an hour without touching it.

The engineer, it appears, if he has an important run to make, comes to his engine an hour before starting. His first business, on an English railroad, is to read the notices, posted up in the engine house, of any change in the condition of the road requiring special care. His next duty is to inspect his engine in every part; first, to see if there is water enough in the boiler, and that the fire is proceeding properly; then, that he has the necessary quantity of water and coal in the tender. He next gets into the pit under his engine, with the proper tools, and inspects every portion of it, trying every nut and pin within his reach from below. Then he walks around the engine, and particularly notices if the oiling apparatus is exactly adjusted. Some parts require, for example, four drops of oil every minute, and he must see that the apparatus is set so as to yield just that quantity. He is also to look into his tool-box, and see if every article is in its place. Mr. Reynolds enumerates twenty-two objects which a good engineer will always have within his reach, such as fire implements of various kinds, machinist tools, lamps of several sorts, oiling vessels, a quantity of flax and yarn, copper wire, a copy of the rules and his time-table; all of which are to be in the exact place designed for them, so that they can be snatched in a moment.

One of the chief virtues of the engineer and his companion, the fireman, is one which we are not accustomed to associate with their profession; and that is cleanliness. On this point our author grows eloquent, and he declares that a clean engineer is almost certain to be an excellent one in every particular. The men upon a locomotive cannot, it is true, avoid getting black smudge upon their faces. The point is, that both the men and their engines should be clean in all the essential particulars, so that all the faculties of the men and all the devices of the engine shall work with ease and certainty.

"There is something," he remarks, "so very degrading about dirt, that even a poor beast highly appreciates clean straw. Cleanliness hath a charm that hideth a multitude of faults, and it is not difficult to trace a connection between habitual cleanliness and a respect for general order, for punctuality, for truthfulness, for all placed in authority."

Do you mark that sentence, reader? The spirit of the Saxon race speaks in those lines. You observe that this author ranks among the virtues "a respect for all placed in authority." That, of course, may be carried too far; nevertheless, the strong races, and the worthy men of all races, do cherish a certain respect for lawful authority. A good soldier is *proud* to salute his officer.

On some English railroads both engineers and engines are put to tests much severer than upon roads elsewhere. Between Holyhead and Chester, a distance of ninety-seven miles, the express trains run without stopping, and they do this with so little strain that an engine performed the duty every day for several years. A day's work of some crack engineers is to run from London to Crewe and back again in ten hours, a distance of three hundred and thirty miles, stopping only at Rugby for three minutes on each trip. There are men who perform this service every working day the whole year through, without a single delay. This is a very great achievement, and can only be done by engineers of the greatest skill and steadiness. It was long, indeed, before any man could do it, and even now there are engineers who dare not take the risk. On the Hudson River road some of the trains run from New York to Poughkeepsie, eighty miles, without stopping, but not every engineer could do it at first, and very often a train stopped at Peekskill to take in water. The water is the difficulty, and the good engineer is one who wastes no water and no coal.

Mr. Reynolds enumerates all the causes of accidents from the engine, many of which cannot be understood by the uninitiated. As we read them over, and see in how many ways an engine can go wrong, we wonder that a train ever arrives at its journey's end in safety. At the conclusion of this formidable list, the author confesses that it is incomplete, and notifies young engineers that *nobody* can teach them the innermost secrets of the engine. Some of these, he remarks, require "years of study," and even then they remain in some degree mysterious. Nevertheless, he holds out to ambition the possibility of final success, and calls upon young men to concentrate all their energies upon the work.

"Self-reliance," he says, "is a grand element of character: it has won Olympic crowns and Isthmian laurels; it confers kinship with men who have vindicated their divine right to be held in the world's memory. Let the master passion of the soul evoke undaunted energy in pursuit of the attainment of one end, aiming for the highest in the spirit of the lowest, prompted by the burning thought of reward, which sooner or later will come."

We perceive that Michael Reynolds possesses one of the prime requisites of success. He believes in the worth and dignity of his vocation; and in writing this little book he has done something to elevate it in the regard of others. To judge from some of his directions, I should suppose that engineers in England are not, as a class, as well educated or as intelligent as ours. Locomotive engineers in the United States rank very high in intelligence and respectability of character.

Thoughts at an Evening Party.

The similarity of man is very perplexing. "The similarity of man!" That sounds a little singular, but I know what I mean. I don't allude to the wonderful likeness, anatomically prepared, of man to his brother monkey. I am thinking of the full-dress gentleman and the full-dress waiter. If some one doesn't put a chalk mark on the back of that handsome waiter, whose principal duty seems to be to wave his glove at the other waiters, I *know* Miss Gushington will seize him by the arm, under the impression that he is a person of distinction to whom she has been introduced, and drag him away to dance "The Glide" with her. I should like to warn her, only it would be such fun to see her do it, and one can't waste a chance for a secret smile on such a solemn occasion as an evening party.

The *real* person of distinction, My Lord Fitz Foodle, from over the sea, is standing in the corner there. He has been stricken dumb by poor Mr. Spitz, who always makes such dreadful mistakes, and who, as the nobleman entered the room looking about him for his hostess, cried out to him: "I say, here, waiter, two ices."

Five minutes afterwards, Mr. Spitz, who is slow, said: "Beg pardon, I'm sure," to one of the waiters, who did not at all know what he meant, and said: "Yes, sir—certainly, sir."

Now, my lord is glaring indignantly in a corner, with stout Miss Sphynx standing on his toes, and his hostess is looking for him. She has just bowed to the tall waiter, and thinks she has found Fitz Foodle. What will happen now? Oh, nothing. The waiter retires gracefully, gripping lemonade cups in his gloved hands.

Talking of bowing: Poor Mr. Bobolink! *how* mortified he is! He has bowed most gracefully to a pallid bust of Pallas upon a pedestal. If near-sighted people only *would* all wear glasses! "Do you suppose she means to cut me?" he asks his friend, in a mortified tone of voice. "That fair girl in white? It's Miss *Blanch Blanc; I should know her by her complexion in any company.*"

Horror of horrors! There is Miss Bliss, the poetess, who scorns fine dress. Good Miss Pleasem undertook to advise her to sacrifice to the graces a little, for so grand an occasion. The result is terrific: an orange-colored window-curtain—I *think* it is a window-curtain—over green grenadine, and a scarlet sash. Has she dropped her hair down her back on purpose? or lost her comb by accident? No one will ever know.

The Lancers! Mr. Spitz is coming to ask me to dance. If only it was genteel to call the figures; but it is not. *All* the men in that set are learned, scientific, or literary persons. When the hostess has asked them to dance, they have said: "Certainly; one should always conform to custom on such occasions;" and now they will stand at their respective posts, each talking of his hobby, until despairing partners whisper, "*Our* turn, please." Then they will amble about a little, be dragged back, hit their heads together, tear the ladies' dresses, apologize, turn the wrong lady, bow to everybody indiscriminately, and become the laughing-stock of the young non-dancing men who know every step and figure perfectly, and are too lazy to do them. A literary and scientific set of the Lancers is glorious. Here I go. Mr. Spitz always falls down with his partner, too.

Mr. Spitz wants to know whether the tall, splendid gentleman in side-whiskers is the celebrated Professor Smasher who discovered something, or did something wonderful. I say "No," with certainty. The person with the dusty coat, who skulked in just now as if he came after the spoons, and sits on a low chair behind the *étagère*, may be he; but *not* this glorious combination of side whisker, white glove, and hot-house button-hole bouquet.

Now, *why* does old Mr. Scroggins say to middle-aged Miss Ropes: "Our dancing days are over, and it pleases us best to look on, now?" Does he suppose that *that* is the way to make himself agreeable at an evening party? And, yes—the mistake has happened just as I expected. Miss Gushington is telling that handsome waiter that she "hasn't met him since the Charity Ball," and he says, "No, ma'am; certainly not, ma'am;" just as—"Dear me, Mr. Spitz, I *hope* you are not hurt?" "Oh, no; not at all."

MARY KYLE DALLAS.

A Relief from Hard Times.

[From the Whitewater (Wisconsin) Register.]

There is an open door of escape for many from the troubles of "hard times." Any man who has health and enough money to carry himself and family to the rich farming lands of the West and South-west, cannot only make a good home there, but can lay the foundation of a fortune. In Kansas and Nebraska a man can secure three hundred and twenty acres of land by the payment of only fourteen dollars in money. It seems hard to a person who has a home and all the pleasant relations of friends and society well established to his tastes, to break away and start anew under circumstances which involve hardships and privations; and it seems hard to advise one's friends to go away and seek homes elsewhere. But we think that there is no doubt that the new lands in the West offer the best opportunity for men of energy and enterprise that can be found.

Turn Him Out.

[From the Christian Intelligencer.]

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

There are cases not a few, where the family happiness for years is marred by the presence of some crabbed, angular, and selfish man or woman who has means at command, and who might quite as well dwell somewhere else. I have seen the sweet confidences of a house made nearly impossible, the daily delight of children shadowed, the mother's cares increased and her temper fretted, and the general pleasantness of things obscured by the fact that one cross, unsympathizing and complaining soul, like an evil leaven, pervaded all that went on.

Never Ate Any Meat.

[From the Hartford Times.]

Captain Stephen Tiffany, a soldier of 1812, who died at Walpole, N. H., recently, aged 85, never, during his whole life, ate any meat or drank any milk, and was never sick except when at the age of 60 he had the measles.

THE SILENT WOOER.

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

Were it well if her smile should brighten
As she marks my fevered air,
Just a moment my heart to lighten
Of its torturing load of care?
Ah, no! If she reads the wherefore
Of my pallor, unrest and pain,
Better still from far, like a cold, white star,
Show naught but her calm disdain.

Yet I love her, alas! how madly,
And, of all at her queenly call
Who simper and sigh so gladly
For a look or a word let fall,
Feels she ever such pure devotion
Of spirit and mind and heart
As mine, as mine, which is all divine,
Though it worship in stealth apart?

But, alas! what whispereth to me
To find 'neath her proud repose
A kindness at times—to undo me,
Or to make, or to mar, who knows?
Last night, when I turned her music,
And she saw how my strong hand shook,
Did no tremor creep in her song's rich sweep?
Was there never a start—a look?

And again, when I saw her crushing
Her bouquets with a listless air,
My little moss-rose lay blushing
Alone in her raven hair.
There were jewels at throat, ear and bosom,
But no other flower she wore;
And she must have known, from my beds alone
Such roses had come before.

How the costlier blooms it cheapened
As it blushed in the shadowy hair!
And methought that her own cheek deepened
As my dazed look sought it there.
But so many hovered to flatter—
The rich, the proud and the gay—
May it not have chanced that her favor glanced
Another and fairer way?

Howsoever it be, 'twere better
She should know of my jealous pain,
Just a space my heart to unfetter
Of its torturing, clinging pain.
Better far the outspoken passion
That must shock or entrance her ear,
Than the death-in-life of this haunting strife
Between passion and hope and fear.

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THE
Mystery of Twichley Hall.

By CARLOTTA KINGSLEY.

CHAPTER IX.

DR. GORDON.

Dr. Gordon lost no time in getting his guest to bed. He fully expected that the following morning would find him in a raging fever from which he could not easily rally; but, much to his surprise, before the other inmates of the house were astir, and even before the doctor himself had arisen, Duncannon was heard anxiously pacing the floor of his chamber.

The institution to which we have introduced the reader was a small, retired establishment—a "retreat" rather than an asylum for the insane. Only a limited number of patients were received, and these were treated more like members of one large family than as unfortunates whose condition rendered them objects of suspicion and alarm. It is true that a strict guardianship was maintained, and, in some instances, restraint, when necessary, was imposed; but such occasions were rare under the kind and wise management of the excellent superintendent.

Dr. Gordon was a man whose native endowments especially fitted him for the position he held. Not only did he command the liking, and even the affection of his unhappy charges, but he also became the friend and adviser of those who brought acquaintances or relatives to put under his care.

For many years he had known Arthur Duncannon. Their intercourse began under trying and peculiar circumstances, and, as time passed, the amiable physician found that his regard for the young man steadily increased.

During Duncannon's absence in Europe, a regular, though infrequent, correspondence had been maintained, the nature of which served to cement the friendship which had already been established. It was with real sorrow, therefore, that Dr. Gordon saw his friend so unmistakably involved in trouble.

Consequently, when he heard Duncannon's nervous footsteps, he hastily quitted his own bed and ordered an early breakfast to be prepared, of which he and Duncannon alone partook.

The young man was chary of talk, depressed in spirits, and evidently struggling with physical as well as mental disquietude. Dr. Gordon's cheerful efforts to draw his mind from himself and his difficulties were quite unsuccessful, so much so, that at the close of the meal Duncannon tendered him a frank apology for his seeming churlishness.

"In fact, my dear Doctor," he said, "I think I must make a confidant of you before you will accept my excuses."

"Don't mention anything of the kind, or feel that you must seek my pardon," said the cheery doctor. "I have lived long enough to know that people can't go through life without trouble in one way or another, and if we were all bound to confide in our acquaintances on such scores, there would be few secrets in the world, I imagine."

"My motive in confiding in you is a selfish one, I fear," Duncannon answered. "I am in trouble."

"That 's clear enough, my dear friend."

"I want your counsel and assistance."

"Both shall be readily given," was the physician's hearty reply. "You have only to tell me in what way I can serve you."

A servant had removed the breakfast things; so the two gentlemen drew their chairs toward the fire place in the doctor's pleasant morning-room, and settled themselves for confidential talk.

Dr. Gordon was greatly surprised by the first question which his guest propounded.

"Was my aunt, Miss Armitage, murdered, or did she commit suicide?"

"Why, my dear sir, you take me quite aback by so unexpected a question," exclaimed he. "She committed suicide."

"Is that your firm, unbiased belief?"

"It is, most certainly."

"Will you be good enough to tell me upon what you found your belief?"

"Upon every circumstance connected with your relative's life and death. She had no enemies, had she?"

"Assuredly not; none that might really be called such."

"Were there any vicious servants in her employ who would have committed such a deed?"

"None."

"Did her room present any appearance of a murderer's having entered it?"

"None whatever. Her doors and windows were found so securely fastened that her servants were forced to break the bolts and bars of her room in entering it."

"And never since then, I believe, has any mode of ingress, by which a murderer could gain access to her room, been discovered?"

"Never."

"Then, my dear Mr. Duncannon, why should this question of a possible murder have arisen?"

"Because I have been accused of committing it."

Dr. Gordon sprang to his feet as if electrified.

"What, Duncannon!" he exclaimed. "*You* accused of *murder*?"

"Yes, I am accused of having caused Miss Armitage's death."

"It's a lie! It's a false, base slander!" cried the physician, stamping his foot heavily upon the floor.

"And yet my accuser brings forward abundant testimony to prove that I really did the deed."

"He manufactures the evidence himself, then," retorted the doctor.

"No, he does not," answered the other. "His evidence is entirely circumstantial, entirely founded upon circumstances which transpired at the time, as well as upon other facts and incidents of an irrefragable nature."

The superintendent looked at his guest for some seconds in silence.

"Is it possible you are your own accuser?" he said. "Has your aunt's terrible death so worked upon your imagination that you are beside yourself, and are striving to constitute yourself her murderer? In my professional experience I have known of such cases, but, upon my word, I should never have suspected you of being the victim of such a delusion."

"It is no delusion. Would to Heaven it were!" ejaculated Duncannon. "To make a long story short, Doctor, I find that some years ago I innocently made an enemy of a person whom I considered a friend, and to whom I owed some little debt of gratitude. For years, that person has been nursing his wrath and waiting for an opportunity when he could gratify his revenge. A month or so ago, I ignorantly gave him the opportunity he sought. I appointed him my agent at Twichley, and wrote him to put the Park in a habitable condition for my future residence. In a postscript, if I remember rightly, I made some reference to my aunt's apartments in the north wing, and directed that they should not be disturbed, as they were unpleasantly associated in my mind with past events."

"A very natural feeling, indeed," interpolated the doctor.

"So it seemed to me," continued Duncannon; "and I little thought that any one could misconstrue that feeling. But my agent found in that innocent remark the very opportunity he had been waiting for so long. He saw in my dislike of those rooms an evidence of guilt, and upon that suspicion he has built such a skillful mass of evidence against me, that unless I have instant help from some powerful quarter I fear I am lost."

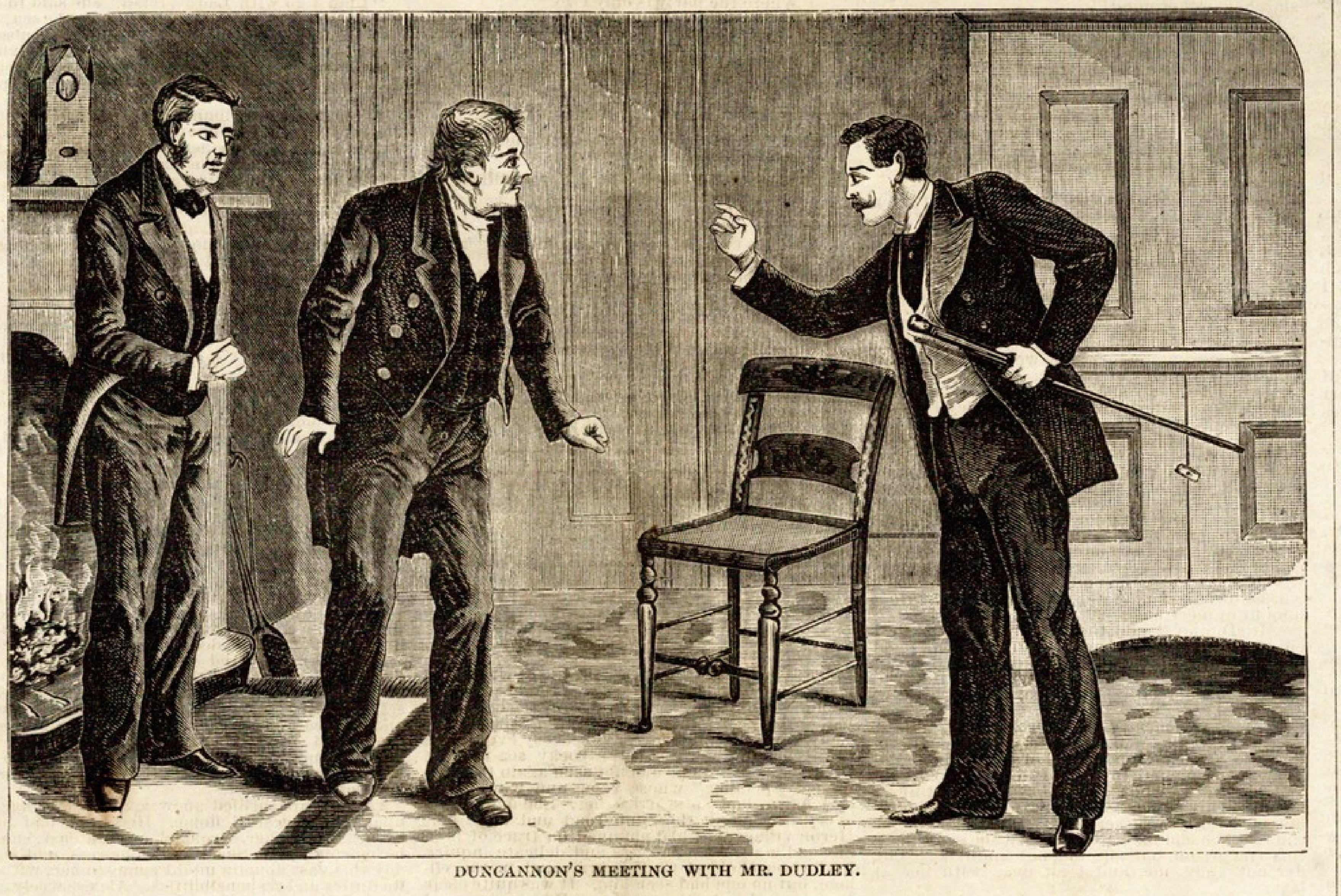
"Do not say that, Duncannon," cried the doctor, energetically. "An innocent man should not despair at the first breath of suspicion."

Arthur Duncannon answered gravely:

"When you know all, Dr. Gordon, you will see that I have the greatest cause for alarm. Could I conscientiously throw suspicion from my own shoulders and cast it where it is possible it properly belongs, I should have no fear; but I am bound by considerations which make me helpless."

"Explain yourself," said the physician.

"Bethink yourself, Dr. Gordon, and it will not be necessary for me to explain."



DUNCANNON'S MEETING WITH MR. DUDLEY.

"Do you refer in any manner to your unhappy relative under my charge?"

"I do."

The superintendent mused a few moments, and then resumed:

"From the drift of the questions you put to Stephenson last evening concerning Mr. Dudley, I inferred that you suspected him of having caused some mischief."

"Mischief!" repeated Duncannon, excitedly, his manner suddenly changing from apathetic calmness to vigorous activity. "Mischief! If it is proven that Miss Armitage was murdered, then Hiram Dudley is her murderer!"

For an instant Dr. Gordon stopped breathing.

"Impossible!" he presently ejaculated. "How could a patient under my charge commit such a deed, and I have no knowledge or suspicion of it?"

"Think a moment—a very short moment," said Duncannon. "You will see I have ample occasion for suspecting him. Where was he the night of Miss Armitage's death? Did not Stephenson say that he eluded the attendants that evening?"

"He certainly did; but he was not gone long enough to go to Twichley and back, besides accomplishing what you suspect."

"How do you know that, Doctor? Stephenson truly admits that he does not know how long he had been gone when his absence was discovered."

"That is very true, Duncannon; but reflect upon the time such a deed would require. The Park is full eight miles from here. Dudley could not have walked there and back, a distance of sixteen miles; could not have gained a difficult access to Miss Armitage's apartments; could not have struggled with, overpowered, and murdered her in the time he was probably gone. I myself saw Dudley at nine o'clock that evening. It couldn't have been later than ten when his absence was discovered, and at midnight he was found. Granting that he left here at ten, or even at nine o'clock, immediately after I made my evening visit to the wards, he would only have had three hours to go and come from Twichley. A horse could scarcely have made the distance in that time."

"But consider," said Duncannon, "consider the rapidity of a madman's movements? When mania is on such an one, I doubt not he would be able to outrun a fleet horse. And then, too, consider that Stephenson and those with him met Dudley coming from the direction of Twichley."

"Very true."

"He was in the wildest state of excitement."

"Yes."

"His hands were bloody; Stephenson supposed from thorns and briars, but I believe from a different cause."

"It is possible, but not probable," remarked the physician.

"Consider, too, that his first movement was to seize Stephenson by the throat, as he had doubtless seized his victim. Very well. He was elated and excited beyond measure, Stephenson says. He laughed immoderately, and, as you must surely remember, Doctor, that is the manner of maniacs when they have successfully accomplished some murderous purpose."

Dr. Gordon's manner became more grave, but evidently he was not yet convinced by his visitor's words.

Duncannon proceeded:

"You must also be aware, Doctor, that between my aunt and Hiram Dudley there was some mysterious connection."

"From the first I suspected as much," he answered.

"You know, also, it was at her request that I brought him here and put him under your charge."

"Yes."

"I clearly remember that, from that period, my aunt's inquiries concerning him ceased. Before that period, when he resided at an institution similar to yours in town, she expected from me regular reports of his health and mental condition. But from the date of his coming to you she never mentioned his name, except to bid me charge you to keep strict watch over him, and see that he did not escape."

"That is very true," again acquiesced the doctor. "She also wrote me upon the same subject, and even hinted that my guard was not so secure as it might be."

"Is that indeed true?" exclaimed Duncannon. "Have you the note still in your keeping? I hope most sincerely that you have not destroyed it."

The doctor arose, and going to an adjoining room, which was his study, opened an escritoir, and after some time spent in rummaging among old papers, letters, bills and receipts, presently returned with a tiny note in his hand. It was delicately written, worded and folded, a good specimen of a lady's billet of a long past day.

A faint odor of lavender exhaled from it as the physician unfolded it. He passed it over to Duncannon, who read:

"Miss Euphemia Armitage presents her most respectful compliments to Dr. William Gordon, and begs he will be in nowise offended if she makes a certain request respecting an invalid under Dr. Gordon's care, who is her, Miss Armitage's, relative.

"She begs leave to suggest that strict care should be taken that, for the present, he does not quit the precincts of the institution where he resides, for it has become known to Miss Armitage that his mood is a very excitable one, and she dreads any aggravation of his malady. Miss Armitage would be greatly indebted to Dr. Gordon, if he would increase the number of Mr. Dudley's attendants so he may be, for the present, under constant surveillance."

The missive was dated June 25th of the year preceding the writer's decease.

"This note is of priceless value to me," said Duncannon.

"Then retain it by all means. I am in the habit of preserving the letters of my patrons, but this is of no especial interest to me since Miss Armitage's death."

"I doubt if there is a more important bit of writing in your possession," said Duncannon. "May I ask if you complied with the request which this note contains?"

"Most certainly," was the reply. "I did so for a time; but when Mr. Dudley became better, I saw no further necessity for such strict watch and so dismissed the additional attendant."

"Stephenson spoke last evening of certain escapades which Mr. Dudley had made prior to the adventure which he related. Did those escapades take place before, or after, you received this note?"

"Before, if I remember rightly."

"Then this note was occasioned by them."

"How so, pray? How could Miss Armitage have known of them?"

"I believe he visited her at such times."

"Impossible, my dear Duncannon. Just as impossible as that he could have gone to the Park the night of your aunt's death."

"And I assure you, Dr. Gordon, it is equally possible that he visited the Park on all occasions," replied Duncannon, with decision.

The physician's face flushed with something like anger at being thus almost flatly contradicted in a matter where his own professional accuracy was involved.

Duncannon noticed his annoyance, and hastened to make a suitable apology:

"Forgive me if I seem rude in my assertions," he said, holding out his hand, which his companion unhesitatingly accepted. "I do not set my opinion against yours, without some warrant in fact. You acknowledge, do you not, that Mr. Dudley now visits the Park?"

"He does so freely, and I may say that the innocent, harmless excursions which he makes to the place seem to do him infinite good. He goes with my entire knowledge and full approval; but that he ever could have made such visits when under surveillance I do not acknowledge, for it would have been an utter impossibility, either to elude us for so long, or to make the excursion in so short a time."

"And yet, Doctor, what if I were to tell you that at that period—the period just preceding the date of this letter—a certain old servant in my aunt's employ used to hear voices in her room late at night, after she had retired and locked herself in for the night?"

The superintendent regarded his companion with severity, even with indignation.

"Duncannon," he exclaimed, "are you aware what an imputation you are casting upon your dead relative's memory?"

Duncannon quickly said:

"Do not misunderstand me, sir. There is much in Miss Armitage's life which mystifies and perplexes us. What relationship there may have been between her and Mr. Dudley we do not know, but whatever that relationship may have been, it was of the most upright and honorable kind. I repeat that the old man-servant in my aunt's employ used to speak frequently of hearing voices in her room late at night—voices in dispute, he asserted. Now, what if it should be shown that Dudley, by the same means whereby he left his room here, gained access to that of Miss Armitage at the Park, and so visited her whenever he eluded his guardians? If that fact should be established, it would not be a difficult matter, I think, to prove that he at last made a deadly assault upon her. This note from her hand shows that even she may have had some such fear."

"It cannot—it cannot be possible," said the doctor, but with less conviction in his tone than he had formerly expressed. "I cannot believe but that if this crime had been committed in the way you speak of, some intimation of it would have been discovered long ago. I do not set myself up as being a man of super-extraordinary penetration. Neither am I one who would be blind to events which transpired almost before my eyes."

Duncannon replied with some spirit:

"Nevertheless, Doctor, you should not dispute the evidence of others too strongly. It is admitted that some of your assistants were at times careless and disobedient; so, why not acknowledge that their carelessness and disobedience may have had unhappy, even terrible, results? Why are you so averse to receiving my testimony in this matter?"

"Because, my dear Duncannon, I look upon your testimony as a theory which your peculiar position makes more probable to you than it would seem to any one else."

"You certainly cannot believe me base enough to wish to save myself at the cost of implicating an innocent man."

"I do not think so unworthily of you, my friend. Yet when you assert that a man performs a deed which is emphatically impossible, then I must think that your conclusions are at fault."

Arthur Duncannon inwardly groaned. He had come to this place for aid from the only person in the wide world who could help him, and that person refused to credit him, and, in thus refusing, knocked from beneath his feet the last plank between him and destruction.

"Besides," said the doctor, in continuance, little imagining the anguish his words caused him who heard them; "besides, you forget that every circumstance attending your aunt's death confirmed her suicide. The deed was done with a garden knife, which the gardener himself had seen her use only that very day, and she had taken this knife to her room that morning, as her maid testified. Why should she have done so peculiar a thing if she had not some object in so doing. Why did she not send the knife to the tool-house, or leave it below stairs, where such things were ordinarily kept?"

"Very true," replied Duncannon; "but do you not also remember that it was her custom to keep some defensive weapon in her chamber, and that the pistol, which she usually had with her, needing some trifling repair, she took this knife in its place?"

"Why did your aunt have such a fancy for defensive weapons?" asked the doctor.

"For the same reason, I suppose, that she locked herself into her room at night so securely, and for the same reason that her father before her observed the same habit. But to return to the subject of suicide: When you were called to my aunt's bedside that dreadful night, did you observe anything in the manner of her seeming death which would have entirely refuted the supposition of murder; that is, was the wound of such a nature that another hand beside her own might have dealt it?"

"Yes, I certainly think so," replied the physician. "Had there been any other circumstances, or circumstance, upon which to rest the idea of murder, I should have hesitated in pronouncing it a case of suicide, for the wound was of such a nature that, as you say, it might have been made by Miss Armitage's own hand, or by that of another."

"Then," said Duncannon, drawing his chair nearer that of his companion, and dropping into that low, impressive tone which people unconsciously adopt when about relating something very startling, "suppose I tell you that in that chamber there is an indisputable evidence of another person's having been there that fatal night—what then?"

"Why, then," said the doctor, gravely—"why, then I should be more inclined to credit your theory."

"My theory?" repeated Duncannon, bitterly. "A sane man must have something more tangible than 'theories' when his life is at stake. Believe me, Doctor, I shall yet convince you that I am not a visionary."

"But the proof—the proof," interrupted the physician, impatiently.

In a few words Duncannon related the manner in which Norris had obtained and exhibited the impression of a naked foot from Miss Armitage's room.

"Rest assured," he continued, "Robert Norris would never have considered that a decisive proof of murder, and would never have played it against me like a trump card, as it were, if there had not been truth and meaning in it. He looked upon that impression as the last fatal evidence against me. The unusual formation of my foot is a family peculiarity. My aunt herself, as you may remember, had a similar superfluity, and you must know that Mr. Dudley's right foot is the same as mine. Stephenson told us last evening that he was barefooted the night of his escape; he also asserted, from positive remembrance, that it was the right foot which was the most seriously hurt, 'as though,' to quote his own words, 'as though he had stepped on a bit of glass, or piece of sharp rock.' Now let me ask you where the garden knife was lying when you entered Miss Armitage's room. I well remember its position myself; but for fear, as you say, my brain is turned by anxiety, I will trust your recollections before my own."

The physician replied:

"I distinctly remember it lay on the floor beside Miss Armitage's bed. Her right arm was stretched out and the knife lay half-way down the length of the bed, just as though it had dropped there from her hand after she had given herself the fatal blow."

"Precisely," replied Duncannon. "It lay on that very spot when I and the servants entered the room. Is your recollection of that night so distinct that you remember anything more about the chamber?"

"Nothing further respecting the position of the knife, save that as I approached the bedside, I should have stepped upon it, if its gleaming blade had not warned me of its presence, for it lay on so dark a spot on the carpet, that it would not otherwise have been noticed."

"Then there was where it fell, after the fatal deed was was done, and the murderer, in adjusting the body upon the bed, or flinging it back from his arm, stepped upon the sharp blade and got the wound which made the bloody impression. My own right-foot bears a scar which, had Norris noticed it, would have fixed double conviction upon me in his mind, but I got it, when a boy at school, in a foot-race. You are a physician and can tell, perhaps, if the wound is of more recent getting."

He quickly uncovered his foot, as he had before done for Norris, and submitted it to the doctor's inspection.

"You are right," the latter said, after a short examination. "That scar was undoubtedly left in childhood. It has lost the reddish hue it would have, if made at any time within the past five or six years."

Despite his former assertions, Dr. Gordon was now becoming deeply interested in his visitor's story. He no longer regarded it as a "theory," but with sincere, unaffected attention, gave heed to every word Duncannon spoke.

CHAPTER X.

A DANGEROUS VISIT.

"And so, it is upon the supposition of murder, and upon these proofs, that Robert Norris has brought this accusation against you?" said Dr. Gordon, after a few moments' pause.

"It is," replied Duncannon.

"And you think he will make out a strong case against you?"

"I have no doubt of it," the other answered. "Unsuspicious of evil myself, I have unwittingly given him every opportunity to carry out his own treacherous schemes, and he has profited by his chances. It was with difficulty that I could gain from him any respite from instant arrest and imprisonment."

"You can't mean to say," exclaimed the doctor, "that he was ever inclined to carry his resentment so far?"

"Certainly," answered Duncannon, "and why not? He really believes me guilty of this crime; yet, it is not altogether in the interest of justice that he pursues me."

"I think it is in revenge, you told me,"

"Yes, in revenge, and for the purpose of wresting from my keeping a secret which he believes I possess."

"How does he expect to win your confidence, if he accuses and persecutes you so relentlessly?"

"He agrees to abandon his prosecution, and to forever hold his peace, if I will give him the information he seeks."

The superintendent's face grew purple with indignation.

"Never *purchase* life and liberty where you have done nothing to forfeit it!" he cried. "I do not ask you what the secret is that Norris wishes to gain, but take my advice, Duncannon, and never truckle to a sharper. If you have right on your side, stand up for it. If you are an innocent man, assert your innocence, prove it, fight for it, but for the sake of all that is worth living for, *don't buy it!* If liberty is yours by right, don't admit even the *possibility* of any one's robbing you of it!"

"Dr. Gordon," said Duncannon, "you but echo my own sentiments; but again I must remind you that I am bound by considerations which make me quite helpless."

"What are those considerations?" asked the doctor, testily.

"They are quickly named. In the first place Norris thinks he has proved that a murder has been committed, and I cannot say but that he is right."

"Very well."

"A murder having been proved, it naturally follows that the murderer must be found."

"True."

"Norris believes that I am that murderer."

"It 's a lie."

"So you believe, my good friend, and so I know; but he has enough evidence to convict me. I can save myself by producing the real murderer, and transferring the crime from my shoulders to his."

"Then it is clearly your duty to do so."

"Do you think so? Pause a moment. Is it my duty to save myself at the cost of sacrificing *my own father?*"

"What!" gasped the doctor.

"Yes," replied Duncannon. "My father, your patient, is the real murderer."

"Mr. Dudley your father!" repeated the physician. "I knew there was some relationship between you, but I never imagined it could be so close. My dear young friend, you are indeed sorely beset, and I no longer wonder at the anxiety which I see is nearly driving you frantic."

"It is indeed," replied Duncannon, in a husky voice. "I have therefore come to you, relying upon your cool, clear head and your dispassionate judgment."

The doctor remained silent for a long time. He was recalling the conversation he had had with his friend, and pondering also the various circumstances which had attended their acquaintance.

Duncannon, on his part, was thinking of quite a different matter, and was the first to speak.

"Perhaps I owe you an explanation, or an apology, for having kept my relationship to your patient a secret," he said.

"Not at all—not at all," the superintendent promptly replied. "It is quite a common thing for such relationships to be concealed. The taint of insanity in a family is a very great misfortune, and under ordinary circumstances should be hidden, if possible. I knew that your interest in Mr. Dudley was founded upon some close connection, but I scarcely expected him to prove a nearer relative than an uncle or cousin. As he is your father, he is undoubtedly the brother or brother-in-law of Miss Armitage."

Duncannon replied:

"You will hardly credit me, Doctor, when I tell you that I have never been able to trace the precise degree of relationship which exists between us three. Could I do so, much which is now strange and inexplicable would become clear. I was reared by strangers, and as I grew up was told that I was an orphan whose nearest relative was Miss Armitage, of Twichley Hall, and her I was instructed to call aunt. Though at her death I was supposed to inherit her property as heir at law, her will, in reality, made me such. I never knew of the existence of this relative, whom we call Mr. Dudley, until a short time before he became an inmate of your house. Miss Armitage summoned me to the Park on one occasion, saying she had something of importance to communicate to me, and me alone. I obeyed her call, and then it was that she told me of Mr. Dudley's existence, speaking of him as a near relative whose unhappy state caused her the greatest anxiety. She begged me to co-operate with her in whatever plans she might form for his well-being, to which, of course, I promptly pledged myself. The solemn manner in which she charged me to deal affectionately and reverentially with him I shall never forget. She spoke to me as she would have spoken to the son of a man for whom she had great solicitude, and thus it was I became impressed with the idea that he could be none other than my father."

"Did you never ask any questions about the matter?"

"Yes; upon one occasion, a short time after our first interview, I begged her to tell me if my impression was a correct one, and I can never banish from my mind her look when I put the question. She turned pale, raised her hands as if to ward off a blow, and besought me, as I valued her peace of mind and my own, to abandon all speculations as to my relationship with that man."

"Humph!" said the doctor. "A woman of Miss Armitage's strong character must have had some good reason for such conduct."

"She undoubtedly had some good reason for her conduct; and as time went on, I became more than ever convinced that, as you say, the taint of insanity in my father so horrified her, that she resolved my life should not be made wretched by anticipating the same inheritance."

"And for that reason, she kept you ignorant of your relationship to Mr. Dudley?"

"Yes."

"It is quite likely," replied Dr. Gordon. "Miss Armitage was a lady of such keen sensibilities herself, that I believe she would spare the feelings of others to the utmost. You, her favorite and heir, she would, of course, shield from knowledge so harrowing. Nevertheless, at this juncture in your life, it is of the greatest consequence that your precise connection should be established."

"But how can it be so established?"

"Did Miss Armitage leave no family papers which would throw light on the subject?"

"None that I have been able to discover."

"Are there no relatives, or old family servants to whom you could appeal for information?"

"None. The one person likely to possess such knowledge—an old man-servant of my aunt's, named Beauchamp—died some years ago—in fact, shortly after Miss Armitage's own death."

The superintendent arose and took two or three turns about the room.

At last Duncannon asked:

"Would it be of any use to question Dudley himself? Is his mind in such a state that he would impart the information we desire?"

"I very much doubt it," returned the physician. "But you may try the experiment, if you wish."

"I will gladly do so," replied Duncannon. "It is the opportunity I sought last evening, when I asked for an interview with him. Yet, I warn you, Doctor, the visit may be one which will excite your patient beyond measure. I shall not confine myself strictly to this question of relationship, but shall speak of his crime, and will boldly charge him with its commission."

"Are you ready to take the consequences of so doing?" asked the physician. "Remember that madmen, when aroused, are oftentimes most dangerous to deal with."

"I am ready to take the consequences, whatever they may be," replied Duncannon. "He can do no more than assault me, and for that I am prepared."

"Were your errand of less importance, I should advise you to abandon your intention," said Dr. Gordon; "but as matters stand now, it may be your only alternative."

"I look upon it as my only alternative," responded Duncannon, rising.

Both gentlemen left the room. In the corridor they encountered Stephenson, the attendant, who was in search of the doctor.

"Mr. Dudley is in a very bad way this morning, sir," he said.

"Ah, indeed," was the reply. "What seems to ail him?"

"Oh, sir, as near as I can make out, it's a general uneasiness. He says he heard voices last night that kept him awake. He's bound to make trouble of some sort, I'm afraid. If I hadn't set my foot down, he'd been prowling about the house an hour ago and rampagin' no one knows where."

"Well, well," said the doctor, "we will visit him and see what he wants. You may go below and attend to your duties there for an hour or two."

Although thus dismissed, the man did not turn to obey. His manner was so singular that the doctor faced about and said:

"What's the matter, Stephenson? Have you anything more on your mind?"

"Excuse me, sir," the attendant returned, "but does this gentleman go with you to the wards?"

"Certainly; he wishes to see Mr. Dudley," was the reply.

Stephenson looked gravely at the superintendent and shook his head, and, without saying anything further, went to the lower regions of the house, as the doctor had directed.

The two gentlemen ascended the stairs and passed to that part of the building where the wards were situated.

The place was quiet, except for an occasional restless sound which proceeded from a chamber at the other end of the gallery.

The doors of some of the rooms which Duncannon passed were open, showing the inmates sitting peacefully within, some basking in the morning sun which streamed through the broad windows, and others engaged in reading and writing.

"Your patients are very calm this morning," observed Duncannon.

"Yes," replied the doctor. "Even more so than usual. This bright, cheerful morning has its soothing effect. Indeed, these people are tolerably good barometers. Atmospheric changes so quickly affect their moods that I can predict a coming storm with a good degree of certainty, merely by the temper of my patients."

"We are to have fair weather for some time, then, I should judge by present indications," remarked Duncannon.

No further conversation took place between the two gentlemen, for, at that moment, they arrived before the door at the end of the gallery.

It was locked, but the superintendent quickly opened it by means of the keys which he had taken from Stephenson's hands in the hall below. He preceded his visitor in entering the chamber.

"Good-morning, Mr. Dudley," he cheerfully said, on crossing the threshold.

No reply was vouchsafed to this salutation, for the person to whom it was addressed, standing in the centre of the small room, regarded his visitors with unfriendly glances.

The apartment thus entered, though not large, was made cheerful by its sunny location, its bright-hued hangings, and the cozy furniture which it contained. No one would have imagined it the chamber of a madman; yet, those familiar with the place would have known that there was adjoining it another apartment, or, rather, closet, strongly barred and guarded, where the inmate of this chamber had spent more than one terrible season of excitement.

The person standing in the middle of the bright room, sternly regarding his visitors with severe, even malevolent glances, was a man of about sixty years of age, tall, spare in face and figure, but showing a muscular development which might have made a stranger, acquainted with his infirmity, tremble in anticipation of some outbreak.

His countenance was remarkably handsome in lineament, but the wild expression which overspread it chilled and appalled the beholder.

Disregarding the physician's pleasant "good-morning," this person looked directly over his head and beyond him toward the other individual who followed. His countenance changed when his eyes rested upon Duncannon. A flash of recognition passed over his face.

"So," he said in a harsh voice, "so, you have come back!"

Duncannon instantly stepped before the superintendent, and boldly facing the maniac, said:

"Yes, I have come back, and I have come for you."

"For me?" repeated the other, with a half-laugh, between scorn and anger.

"Yes, for you," was the steady rejoinder. "Do you know who I am?"

"I do; you are he who has spoiled my life and brought me to this accursed place."

"What is his name?" asked the doctor, possibly in the hope of surprising him into acknowledging some connection.

"Does *he* know?" was the question in response, as the man pointed to Duncannon.

"Yes."

"And do *you* know it?"

"Assuredly."

"Then *I* need not speak it," was the crafty reply.

He turned toward Duncannon and said:

"So, I did not mistake the sounds I heard last night. I knew you were here. I heard your voice. What brought you here?"

"I tell you I came for you. You are wanted at Twichley Park."

"For what?"

"Miss Armitage wants you."

"Miss Armitage!" repeated the man, a startled look coming into his eyes.

"Yes, Miss Armitage wants you."

"What does she want with me?"

"She wants to see the man who murdered her."

"Who said that?" cried the madman, springing forward as though he would have seized Duncannon by the throat.

"I say it! Arthur Duncannon says it."

"Duncannon!" cried the man, turning to Dr. Gordon with a loud laugh. "He calls himself Duncannon!"

"Is not that his name?" said the doctor, warily.

The man shut himself up, as it were, and looked from one visitor to the other as if he would guard himself equally from each.

"I repeat," said Duncannon, "that I am come to take you to Twichley Park, for Miss Armitage wants to see her murderer."

The startled look which this announcement had at first brought to the insane man's eyes was now replaced by a stony, stolid stare.

Duncannon continued:

"She wants to see the man who broke away from his keepers at night, who ran bareheaded and barefooted through the woods to Twichley Park, who stole into her room after she had retired, who had hard words with her, who seized her garden knife, sprang upon her, and—"

"Take care—take care!" shouted the doctor.

Duncannon's final words were left unspoken, for the man to whom they were addressed sprang toward him with glaring eyes, and gleaming teeth exposed as if for some cannibal-like assault.

The physician's warning was given none too soon. Duncannon sprang aside, and the maniac shot past him and fell prostrate upon the floor.

"You have made a bad beginning," whispered the doctor, in reproof.

What further he said was lost in a burst of maniacal laughter. The madman's frenzy seemed suddenly to have turned to wild merriment.

"So she sent *you* with this message, did she?" he cried. "You! *you!* YOU!" He repeated the word, tauntingly pointing his finger at Duncannon, and dancing wildly about him. "You are to take me there? We are to see her together—you and I? You are to hear what we shall say? *You! You!* YOU!"

Another burst of wild laughter succeeded these words.

"Come!" he cried, seizing Duncannon by the arm; "let us go at once! Let us begone before she changes her mind!"

Duncannon shook himself free from the other's clasp, and said:

"There is another place where I shall take you, after we have been to the Park."

"Where is it?" cried the madman, with the same ecstatic gestures. "Will it be to town—to the great town where people ride in bright carriages; where there is music, flowers and dancing; where there are gay funerals and sad weddings? Say, will you take me where there are weddings, but no brides?"

Duncannon started back, and looked at the being before him with his own eyes now aflame.

"What mean you?" he gasped.

Again the maniac threw himself back and burst forth into loud and long peals of laughter.

"Where there are gay funerals and sad weddings," he repeated. "Where there are weddings, but no brides!"

Stung by this strange allusion to his own incomprehensible past, yet too deeply excited to realize the full meaning which the words might bear, Duncannon quickly answered:

"It will be to no such place that I shall take you, Hiram Dudley. No; from Twichley Park we go to prison, where murderers are kept until the day comes for them to be led out and hanged by the neck until they are dead, dead, *dead!* Miss Armitage's blood calls for vengeance upon you! Her spirit will not rest until you receive the doom you merit!"

Dudley's manner, under the influence of these words, changed from taunting bravado to abject terror; but only for a moment did he seem thus cowed and bowed down. Some diabolical thought was associated in his mind with Duncannon's words, for, a second later, he again burst into a loud fit of merriment.

"Mr. Dudley," said the doctor, when the first ebullition of his amusement had subsided, "did you fully understand Mr. Duncannon's words? Did you commit the crime he speaks of? Did you, indeed, murder Miss Armitage, your protector and friend?"

"*Friend! Friend and protector!*" almost shrieked the madman. "*She* my friend and protector! *She* who robbed me of every right, and finally sent me here to rot and die! She my friend and protector, who stole from me everything I had, even my name. Miss Armitage was a sleuth-hound, I tell you, a serpent, a she-dragon! She thought she had me secured when she sent me to this vile prison, but she did not know me! She did not know me, and I got even with her at last!"

Here he dropped his voice to a dread whisper, and said:

"She is very terrible when she is angry. She can make one repent having done ill," he continued, his tone now becoming confidential. "Oh, I tell you she knows how to make a man wish he had never done ill, and when she gets a hold on one she will not let go. Restitution—restitution was all I asked of her, and she laughed at me, mocked me, and bade me obey her, if I cared to live. Yes, yes, I tell you she is very dreadful when angry. So come! come!" he cried, raising his voice, and again seizing Duncannon by the arm. "Let us go at once!"

He would have dragged him toward the door, but the other resisted and held back.

"It is a long way," he said. "You cannot go just yet."

"We must! We must!" persisted the other. "Now, at once, or not at all."

"No, not yet," replied Duncannon, still holding back. "You cannot take the long walk through the woods. Stephenson says your feet are bruised and sore."

"Stephenson is a liar," shouted Dudley. "My feet are well, nothing ails them."

"I will not believe it until I have seen them," replied Duncannon.

In a twinkling the maniac had cast aside both shoes and stockings. The ruse succeeded, and Duncannon silently pointed to a deep, red scar on Dudley's right foot.

The quick eye of the madman detected the look of intelligence which passed between the physician and his companion, and instantly he knew that a deception had been practised upon him.

With a loud yell of fury he again sprang upon Duncannon. This time, the latter was not on his guard, and being wholly unprepared for the assault, both assailant and assailed fell rolling upon the floor.

Dr. Gordon's experienced hand forced Dudley to let go his hold upon Duncannon's throat, and the latter, exhausted by the fierce, though momentary, struggle, regained his feet.

Another deadly spring was imminent, despite the firm hold which the doctor had upon his patient, but at that moment the door burst open, and Stephenson opportunely arrived.

"Ye've been exciting of him, sir," exclaimed the attendant, casting a reproachful glance at Duncannon.

The latter heeded neither glance nor reproof. In falling so heavily to the floor he had dislocated his shoulder, and the pain of the injury was now so intense as to make him well-nigh beside himself.

The maniac was with difficulty held back from executing his purpose of again assaulting Duncannon. Stephenson's influence, aided by his physical endeavors, soon reduced him to submission, and the doctor, taking his wounded guest by the arm, hastily retreated, and accompanying Duncannon to his chamber, he examined and operated upon the dislocated shoulder.

Weakened by pain and excitement, it was not until late in the day that Duncannon had the strength to again broach the subject which continually haunted him.

"Doctor," said he, as the physician was about quitting him for the night, "Doctor Gordon, this morning you hardly credited the statements I made to you. You called them 'theories,' and believed that my own danger made me quick to catch at straws. May I ask what your present opinion is? Did your visit to Hiram Dudley change your views?"

"It did," was the prompt reply. "I now fully agree with you. I believe in Hiram Dudley's guilt; but there is another matter which must be discussed, ere we can hang much hope upon what he in his frenzy has let drop. To-morrow I shall look still deeper into this affair. In the meantime you must rest and recruit your impaired nerves and strength."

"Rest and recruit!" echoed Duncannon. "Two days of my reprieve have already passed. I must return to town with my defence fully established before Wednesday, or Robert Norris will brand me as a coward and a renegade, as well as a murderer."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

LAVATER'S CRITICISM.

The liability of the most profound to err was never better exemplified than in the following scrap from the reminiscences of Lavater, who will be remembered as the celebrated and exemplary minister of Zurich, and one of the most eminent physiognomists of any time. His writings on physiognomy have been, and are to-day, authority upon all subjects of which they treat, and have been translated into every civilized tongue.

An eminent artist, in the presence of a few warm admirers of the physiognomist who were in the secret, exhibited to Lavater two portraits; one, of a notorious highwayman and murderer, who had been broken upon the wheel, the other being a very excellent likeness of the philosopher Kant, and asked him to distinguish between them, and give his opinion of the characters of the two originals, the artist promising that the portraits were true to life.

Lavater took first the portrait of the highwayman, he being by far the finest and grandest-looking man.

"Ah!" said he, sweeping his hand over the full brow of the pictured face, "here we have the true philosopher. What penetration in the eye, and what reflection in that compact, massive brow. Here is cause—there, effect; here is combination—there is analysis and distinction of parts; synthetic lips; analytic nose. I tell you, gentlemen, that man, if he lives, is fit to wear the mantle of Pythagoras or Aristotle."

Then he turned to the portrait of Kant, who, with all his erudition and wealth of intellect and culture, had the misfortune of being plain of face, and not entirely symmetrical in feature.

"Aha!" he cried, with a shudder, "what need of comment on that face? The calm, deliberating villain is strongly marked in every feature. There is no sympathy; no heart; no conscience. Such a man would out-Nero Nero, and glory in the deed."

Kant got hold of the story, and he used to tell it, at Lavater's expense, with great glee. S. C., JR.

"LOVE'S WEDDING-RING."

BY LOUISE S. UPHAM.

It was not bright, with rubies and pearls,
It was neither grand nor wide,
The tiny, delicate ring that graced
The beautiful hand of my bride;
But it glowed with the tenderest dream of life,
And a glimpse of youth will cling
To that fairy, shining circlet of gold
That I call "Love's wedding-ring."

My bonny bride came home with me
A score of years ago;
Her hair was as brown as a thrush's wing,
And her voice was soft and low;
And we played at keeping house, I think,
Very much as children do,
When they lay the table, and pour the tea,
Where the party is only two.

But there's never a home where *all* days are bright,
And when the bairnies came,
And sickness and trouble followed fast,
My bride was ever the same:
Her tender hands ne'er seemed to tire
In their dutiful labors of love,
And I often likened my children's home
To our radiant home above.

And when our Jamie's breath was stilled,
And all-silently he lay,
She kissed his lips, and gently said:
"One lad is safe for aye!"
And her twilight song by the children's beds,
New sweetness seemed to take,
As she sang of *this* home, and then of that,
For the dear, dead Jamie's sake.

Sweet blossoms fade in the noontide sun,
Or are chilled by the wintry snow;
Not so the love that blessed our hearts
A score of years ago:
We'll keep love's dream and ring, for the days,
When alone, again we wait;
For lo! *our* boys and girls, e'en now,
Are nearing love's magical gate.

FOUND GUILTY;

OR, THE

Marquis's Vindication.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS.

CHAPTER XLV.

FOLLOWING A LEADER.

The eventful Tuesday, the evening of which had been appointed for the second dinner-party at Mount Heron, had arrived. During the days that had intervened since the preceding Thursday, Lady Vivian Clyffe had walked every evening in the grounds and upon the rocky sea-wall at Clyffebourne, but she had not seen again the pretended "peddler" whose voice and whose eyes and figure had so startled her. She had ridden every day along the Bluff road and to Mount Heron village, but had obtained no trace of him. She had made most careless and delicate inquiry in the household at Clyffebourne, and in the village, but no one had seen him. It was quite clear that he had not attempted to sell his wares, and this fact added to and tended to confirm Lady Vivian's suspicions of his identity.

She was in a state of continual feverish unrest which alarmed Felicie, who did not comprehend the cause. At one moment the Lady Vivian would be full of spirits and overflowing with life and excitement; the next she might be plunged in the depths of gloomy abstraction, paying no heed to anything about her, and apparently intent upon some problem that absorbed her entire faculties. What the change in her indicated, no one could surmise; but Lady Markham smiled mysteriously in her gossips with the countess, and said something about "second love" and Lord Mountheron.

Monday came in with a drizzling, heavy rain of the sort peculiar to November—a dreary downpour, blotting out the sea from view, and hanging a thick vail over the park and lawns. Nevertheless, at a late hour of the evening, Lady Vivian went forth upon the cliff for a walk, well-wrapped from the wet, and stayed for a long time in the dense gloom, yet without result. There was no moon, and not a star was visible. Felicie wondered at the strange freaks of her beautiful mistress, and foreboded illness for her.

Tuesday proved yet more comfortless. The rainy weather had been deferred later in the season than usual, but its steady persistence now, with its resolute, business-like fall, was a clear announcement that it had come to stay. Walks and rides were alike impracticable; sails were out of the question; drives in close carriages were without attraction. The lady guests brought out their embroideries and drawings, and other feminine occupations, but the time dragged heavily. Before afternoon of Tuesday, a general departure was announced for the next day.

Mrs. Ingestre had sent invitations for the dinner, and even the bad weather was not likely to prevent an acceptance of them. The poor lady had quite recovered from the shock and exposure incident to the involuntary bath she had received in the capsizing of the *Heron*. It was astonishing that so much vitality remained in a frame so enfeebled as hers had been by long illness and various maladies. The prospect of the dinner-party lent her new strength; she revived as under a cordial. Mrs. Ingestre had a weakness for society and a horror of solitude, and she delighted in playing the part of mistress of the castle, believing it to be for the last time.

"My reign is nearly over," she said to herself, "and that of the Lady Vivian is about to commence. I will retire gracefully. The dinner to-day shall be a triumph of art."

The French *chef*, who presided over the culinary department, would have disdained to discuss the *menu* with any one, even with his master. All that had been necessary, so far as he was concerned, had been to tell him the number of covers required. He had always *carte blanche* for his proceedings. The gentle, melancholy marquis was an epicure, and noted in town and country for his "little dinners." But Mrs. Ingestre discussed housekeeping matters with Mrs. Matthews, and decorations with the butler and gardeners, and was important and busy throughout the forenoon of Tuesday.

Alex was thus left to her own resources. She had remained within doors on Monday, but the need of exercise and a longing for a change impelled her to go out for a walk. The terraces were sodden and indistinct in the pouring rain; the sea was a gray blank; the garden paths were canals; the park was like a shower-bath, with its dripping trees. A visit to any of these was out of the question. The rocks were slippery, and a misstep upon them might result in death. Alex wrapped herself in a long, shrouding sack of waterproof tweed, drawing its hood over her tawny little head, and paced the long, sheltered colonnades and pillared out-door galleries, rather enjoying the wide-spread and utter desolation of the scene around her.

She had visited Clyffebourne once since her sea-adventure, but her interview with Lady Vivian had been interrupted by Lady Markham, and had been nearly barren of result. She had, however, given a half-promise to her ladyship to return to London with her, and she was considering the subject now.

She wished that she could see her father, to solicit his advice, and to warn him to leave England. She had not seen him since her second interview with him in the grounds at Clyffebourne, and she believed that he had returned to London, and was there in hiding. The idea of going to London was therefore linked with the hope of seeing him.

Her one thought, at all times, was of her father. Her love for the Earl of Kingscourt, her new and passionate love for the beautiful mother so unconscious of her existence, her future, her hopes and girlish aspirations—all were subordinate to the great purpose of her life, the mission she had imposed upon herself of proving his innocence of the crime for which he had been found guilty and condemned to die, and reversing the unjust sentence of the judge and the condemnation of his follow-men.

That morning, at the breakfast-table, after perusing his letters, Lord Kingscourt announced his intended departure for his own estates.

"My affairs need looking after," he said; "I have been away so long. And I have other friends who urge their claims upon my attention, and whom I have not seen since my return from Greece."

His eyes, reverting to Alex, expressed the regrets he did not speak.

"Everybody will leave Cornwall. The Lady Vivian and her guests will not linger later than to-morrow," said the marquis, looking discontentedly at the window-panes. "This beastly weather will continue for a fortnight, and we shall have terrific gales. Cornwall will be a wilderness. If you go, Kingscourt, I shall follow Lady Vivian up to town."

"She is a lode-star that draws you in her wake," said Mrs. Ingestre, sentimentally. "If you all go, I shall not be left utterly alone, I hope. I intend to persuade Miss Strange to stay with me until you bring Lady Vivian home—and that will be next month, I suppose."

Lord Mountheron looked gloomily at Alex. The radiant beauty of the girl was utterly distasteful to him. The tawny, massive waves of hair, the sapphire eyes, reminded him but too painfully of the fugitive Lord Stratford Heron. He was uneasy in her presence, and his visit to town would be an escape from it.

But Alex reflected that if the marquis went up to London, his valet would go also. Her object, just now, was to watch Pierre Renard, and she knew that Lord Mountheron would haunt the vicinity of Lady Vivian, and that Renard would come often to see Felicie. Would she not do more toward fulfilling her mission if she went with Lady Vivian, and kept Renard in sight, than if she remained in this lonely castle by the sea, perched upon its wind-swept height, with no occupation but to cheer the solitude of Mrs. Ingestre? These gray old walls could tell her no tales of the Mount Heron tragedy, she thought; these ancient stones could reveal nothing of the dread mystery of that long-ago murder.

"I must go with Lady Vivian," she said to herself, pacing the long colonnade facing the sea. "I can do nothing here when Renard is absent. What I can do in London, or at Lady Vivian's seat, I do not know. I do not see my way clearly. I have been led so far by Providence—that Providence will not desert me now."

She walked the colonnade until she grew tired of its monotony. She knew that Lord Kingscourt believed her to be in her own room, and that he would not seek her. She had encountered Renard at the head of the stairs, and he had paused and looked after her until she had entered her own room. No one had seen her emerge a little later in her water-proof garments, and pass out upon the colonnade. Mrs. Ingestre was too occupied to think of her. She had the entire morning before her, and there was no one to comment upon her movements. A glance in the direction of the ruined portions of the castle, decided her to extend her ramble among them. The roofs were in good repair. She would suffer no exposure to the driving rain. To think was to decide. She quitted the colonnade, passing swiftly across a paved courtyard, and entered the ruins.

The desolation of her surroundings consorted with her mood. She walked through the echoing rooms, looked at the sea from the arched window-frames, wandered through the vast hall that had sheltered a regiment of soldiers in its day, and which was a counterpart of the great hall of the present castle, examined the dining-saloon, hung with trophies of a past age, and paused at last in a dusky room near the chapel. The crumbling walls around her, the cavernous chimney, the stone floor, were all barren of interest, bare and gloomy in the extreme.

Alex crossed the floor, from which the dust was regularly swept, the place having always been, until quite recently, a noted resort of tourists. She sat down in the deep stone seat of an arched window, half covered with thick-clustering ivy leaves, and looked out through their interstices.

Above her loomed the more modern castle, itself centuries old, the subject of a score of legends, and of great historical interest. From her nook she could see its crowning battlements, its towers, and the sodden banner, clinging to its staff, which testified that the lord of the castle was beneath its roof.

Alex's heart thrilled anew as her gaze lingered upon her ancestral home. Here she had been born. Her father, wronged and outcast, should be master here. She was his heiress, and some day this vast domain might come to her, with all its duties and responsibilities. Alex scarcely considered this possibility; her entire thought, now and always, was of him.

Her glance fell from the battlements to the walls below, to two windows closed with heavy wooden shutters, and draped heavily with ivy.

These were the windows of the room in which the late Marquis of Mountheron had been foully murdered. Mrs. Ingestre had once, when they walked upon the terraces, pointed them out to her, and told her that the bed-chamber in which the marquis had met his dreadful doom had been closed after the inquest and never since re-opened.

As she gazed at those windows, a longing came to the girl to enter those rooms so long closed to the light of day and to the inspection of visitors.

The officers of the law had examined them thoroughly, of course, at the time of the tragedy; but might not some faint clew to the murderer have escaped their observation? Might it not be possible that, after all these years, some faint trace might be discovered that would confirm all Alex's suspicions?

"But how can I contrive to enter that room?" she asked herself. "Renard knows me, and he would prevent it. Mrs. Ingestre says that the marquis never alludes to the tragedy, and that no one dare mention it in his presence. Even he has never entered that fatal room. He would never allow it to be opened for me. I might remain behind him a day or two, and persuade Mrs. Ingestre to show me the room. If I found nothing, I could then go up to London alone to Lady Vivian!"

The idea was like an inspiration. She resolved to act upon it.

While Alex thus meditated, the decorations were going on within the castle with success. Mrs. Ingestre was absorbed in her task of overseeing the housekeeper and butler, both of whom were too good-natured to resent her interference, although they understood their business far better than she did.

A special messenger had arrived from Clyffebourne, with a note to the marquis from Lady Vivian.

The contents were brief. Her ladyship said that her guests had terminated their visit, and would leave Clyffebourne on the morrow. She believed that the rain was to be of long duration, and had accordingly decided to go up to London herself with her friends. She should leave servants at Clyffebourne, and expected to return, possibly within a fortnight, possibly later—her return would depend upon the weather. She said, also, that her object in accepting an invitation to dinner at Mount Heron had been partly to show her guests the ruins by moonlight. Moonlight being now, unhappily, an impossibility, and the relinquishment of her intention being unpleasant, she begged the marquis to have the ruins illuminated.

"The very idea!" he exclaimed, delightedly. "The court-yard shall be covered with a water-proof awning and with India rugs, and the ruins shall be illuminated like a beacon. They used to do that, I remember, when Lady Vivian reigned here. She shall think the old days come back. My staid commonplace dinner shall be transformed into a fête."

He hastened to give his orders. The butler understood the art of table decorations perfectly, could arrange flowers in the drawing-rooms, and see to the awnings, marquees, and the arrangement of lights. The ruins were to be hung with Chinese lanterns, as they had been often before, and the lanterns were in the castle.

The marquis dispatched a force of men to clean the floors and walls of the ruins, beginning with the portion nearest the modern castle.

Then he went up to his own rooms.

His valet was in possession, lounging easily in the marquis's favorite chair before the hearth. He did not rise at his master's entrance, but lazily turned his head. The brightness of Lord Mountheron's face was overcast at this familiarity.

"What are you doing in that chair?" he demanded, testily. "Why don't you rise when I enter the room?"

"I wonder how many times you have addressed that question to me," said Renard, meditatively, as if calculating. "And what good did it ever do? I am a Communist in my principles, and consider myself quite as good as you, my Lord Mountheron."

A dull red glowed on the marquis's cheeks.

"But if some servant were to see you?" he suggested, angrily. "They would wonder and gossip—"

"I am too careful for that. It is only when we are alone by ourselves that I indulge in my Communistic ideas," said Renard, carelessly. "Is the dinner to come off to-day, or will the weather prevent?"

"Nothing will prevent. The dinner will be a sort of fête. The ruins are to be hung with Chinese lanterns, and a force of men are engaged in sweeping and scrubbing the floors and walls."

Renard uttered an exclamation.

"They have begun near the castle, and will finish with the chapel. Despite the rain, the evening will be a success. To-morrow, Lady Vivian and her guests go up to London. I shall go, too, and you must find time to pack my boxes to-day, or in the morning."

"Very good," said Renard, rising. "I have been wanting a trip to town, not only for its pleasures, but on business. Jean traced our fugitive up by the early morning train the other day, and has written me that he lodges in Leicester Square. I suppose he is waiting there, like a rat in the trap, till I pounce upon him."

"Lord Stratford Heron in Leicester Square, London?"

"Exactly. Did you think I'd been idle? Go on with your fête and illuminations and gayeties; I'll look out for the dangers and ward them off!" said Renard, importantly. "I've had Jean down here and on the fugitive's track, and he has treed him. When we go up I'll settle his business."

"But secretly. I'll have no publicity, no hanging, until I have made sure of Lady Vivian. His discovery would crush or destroy her. In spite of her divorce, and the array of testimony, she persists in believing him an injured innocent, and would go through fire and water for him. She loves him still! Women are the most perverse beings in creation! I love her to desperation, and I will win her; I have sworn it."

"Women are forts that cannot resist the proper sort of attack," declared the valet, philosophically. "My Lady Vivian will make up her mind that a live horse is better than a dead lion, and will marry you and forget her divorced husband. We'll talk of this to-morrow, or to-night, after the fête. If you play your cards well, you ought to advance your cause handsomely to-night."

He sauntered out of the room, and made his way by a circuitous route to the ruins.

Alex saw him coming with stealthy step, avoiding the workers who had proceeded to the banqueting-hall, and approaching slyly the spot where she was ensconced behind her screen of ivy leaves.

She had no wish to meet him. She had grown to fear him as her would-be murderer. Believing that he was about to seek the very room in which she was sitting, she beat a precipitate retreat to the dusky chapel, with its carved altar, its ancient benches, and the great square family pew, like a room, enclosed with faded tapestry curtains, directly in front of the high pulpit.

Alex hurried along the dim aisle to the door of this family pew. The door was ajar. She entered and sat down upon the ancient cushions upon which her ancestors had been seated centuries ago. She was here in the deepest shadow. The high curtains, suspended by rings from brass poles, were closely drawn, shutting her in. Above was the groined ceiling, vaulted and carven, a work of art.

Before the girl had time to collect her thoughts, a tread sounded upon the floor of the aisle. Her heart beat violently. The step passed by the enclosed family pew toward the chancel. Alex tremblingly parted the curtains, and through the narrow aperture thus gained peeped out.

The intruder was Pierre Renard, as she supposed.

There was a stealthiness in his movements, a secresy, a mystery that impressed her. He looked over his shoulder at every step. He was on the alert, watchful and vigilant. That he had some secret errand here was plain.

Behind the pulpit was the vestry and robing-room. A flight of marble steps led from the chapel directly under the pulpit to the crypt beneath, where the Herons of Mount Heron were anciently sepulchred. Alex had not penetrated to the crypt, but she had been told of its existence and location.

Pierre Renard paused at the head of this flight of stairs, in the shadow of the pulpit, and watched and listened for a full minute. Then, with soft and noiseless tread, he descended to the crypt below.

Alex waited a full minute, wondering as to his movements and the mystery attending them. Then, remembering that her whole duty had centred in the task of watching this man, and this might be a fateful opportunity, she arose and crept down the aisle in pursuit. Her little boots were covered with rubber overshoes, as Renard's had been, and her movements were inaudible. Her dress was of a woolen fabric and did not rustle. She crept to the head of the stairs, paused, listened, looked upward with a prayer in her glorious eyes, and glided down the steps into the deeper darkness of the crypt below.

CHAPTER XLVI.

A STARTLING DISCOVERY.

At the foot of the stairs Alex found herself in a wide marble corridor running from one side of the church foundation to the other. Wide, double doors opened off this into the crypt—a chamber corresponding in size to the chapel above. The doors were ajar; the massive key was in the lock; a long, yellow ray of light streamed out like a golden lance into the corridor.

The girl was delicate—a slim, tender creature of no great physical strength, but her love for her father inspired her with the courage of a hero. She forgot herself and the peril she was incurring. She glided to the half-open door and looked within.

Pierre Renard was standing in the crypt, a lantern in his hand which he had just lighted. The floor of the aisles was formed of marble tablets, each bearing an inscription. Between these aisles were rows of tombs, with sculptured effigies of men and women upon them. The valet walked between these rows and halted at a tomb midway in the second row, and raised his lantern above his head.

Alex could make out that this square tomb bore upon it the marble image of a woman, and that at her feet knelt six small effigies, like dolls. This was the resting-place of a Marchioness of Mountheron, who had left six children to mourn her death.

But what could bring Pierre Renard here? What interest had he in this Lady of Mountheron who had died a hundred years before? Why had he a private key to the crypt? Why was his visit so full of mystery?

Alex held her breath and watched him.

He glanced toward the door, was silent and watchful for a few moments, and then set down his lantern upon the tomb. Placing both hands upon one of the small kneeling effigies, he gave it a dexterous twist, and with an exercise of strength extracted it from its socket in the marble.

A small cavity into which its stem had fitted was revealed.

This cavity was deeper than was necessary for its purpose. The marble stem, or pin, in which the effigy terminated at its base, could not reach to the bottom. Renard thrust in his hand and drew out a tiny wooden box, scarcely two inches square.

Again he listened. Alex was still as death. He moved nearer to the door, that he might listen and watch, and sat down upon a tomb not six feet distant from the girl, who had witnessed his approach, and, in a panic of terror, believing him about to return to the castle, had found herself unable to retreat, and remained transfixed to the spot.

Renard set down his lamp upon the tomb beside him, and drew from his neck a slender silver chain, which he carried hidden in his bosom, and to which was attached a key. With this key he opened the box.

Alex crested her head forward. Her eyes were eager and burning.

The box seemed stuffed with chamois leather and cotton. Renard removed several layers, and turned out upon his broad, red hand the precious objects they guarded.

And Alex saw that these objects were precious stones.

She knew them to be diamonds, at a glance, of rare size, and of the first water. They reflected the light, glowing and scintillating like stars.

Renard held them up in the light of the lantern, and gloated over them.

The watcher grew pale as death, and clung to the door-post.

At last the clew she had wanted had come into her hands! Here was proof of her father's innocence of the crime of which he had been found guilty—proof that Pierre Renard was the murderer.

At last! at last!

She remembered her father's story. The murdered marquis had possessed a mania for precious stones, and had invested more than fifty thousand pounds in their purchase. After his murder, these stones could not be found. It had been thought by some that Lord Stratford Heron had stolen them, and had time to secrete them before the morning when the murder was discovered. There were various other theories, but the one we have mentioned had obtained most credence.

And here were the lost jewels—or a portion of them—in the hands of Pierre Renard!

Their immense value, the fact of his hiding them in the crypt of the ruined chapel, his secresy, his furtiveness, his air of stealth, all showed that he had not come honestly by them.

He turned the gems over. He tossed them up and let them fall in a gleaming shower upon his hands; he examined them one by one; he exulted in them as a miser exults in his gold, yet often stopping in a dead silence, never once forgetting his caution.

At last, he selected one jewel from the rest and hid it in a tiny leathern pouch he took from his pocket, and which, with its added treasure, he thrust in his bosom. Then he returned to the tomb he had desecrated, hid the box in its former resting-place, and screwed and twisted the effigy into its proper position.

Alex did not wait to witness the conclusion of the operation. With trembling limbs, and a heart that pulsated like a mighty engine, filling her whole being, she crept back up the stairs to the huge family pew, and dropped silently upon its cushions.

She had time to grow calm before any sound again broke the stillness. Her heart had become quiet; her cheeks burned less hotly, and she was able to marshal her thoughts into active work.

She comprehended the cause of Renard's visit to the vault at this particular time. His master must have informed him of his intended departure, possibly on the morrow. The ruins were being cleaned; later they would be occupied by visitors. He might not have so good an opportunity to visit the crypt in the limited period of his remaining stay at the castle.

She knew, from what she had seen and overheard, that he was extravagant in his tastes and habits, fond of luxury, given to pleasures and to the spending of money. He must have been in the habit of selling these diamonds in an underhand way to replenish his purse. If he were now going up to London, he must mean to sell the jewel he had now upon his person. The remainder of his ill-gotten booty he would leave in the crypt, in its secure hiding-place, until he should require it, or could remove it all in safety.

She thought all this out clearly to her satisfaction, and then meditated upon her future course.

Her blood bounded in her veins as she realized how much her discovery was worth to her father. It meant for him safety, reinstatement in his rightful position, honors, rank, wealth. Might it not mean reunion with the wife who had been divorced from him, and whom she believed to be betrothed to the present Marquis of Mountheron?

What was she to do? She ought, first of all, to see her father, and then acquaint him with the glad news of her discovery. She could not inform the police of Renard's supposed guilt; she was bound to silence until her father should release her from her promise of absolute secresy.

And then came doubts if, after all, Renard's guilt might be construed as proof positive of her father's innocence. Might not people believe them accomplices? Might not Renard account for the possession of the jewels in some plausible manner? Was their possession absolute proof that he had killed his former master, whom he had hated, or was it simply proof presumptive?

"My work is not done yet," she thought, with a sigh. "I have made a grand beginning; I must follow it up. I have fairly entered upon my great task, but more hard work is before me. I will stay behind Lady Vivian in Cornwall. I will examine the late marquis's room, and some new light may be thrown upon this matter. At any rate, I have made Renard's guilt clear to myself: I shall not rest until it is clear to all the world!"

A faint sound came from the stairs under the pulpit. Renard had locked the crypt and was returning. The girl's terror of him quickened at sound of his step. What if he were to find her? He would surely kill her. With a swift impulse, she stooped and crept under the broad seat, its valance falling over her.

That impulse saved her.

Renard came along the aisle, cat-like and silent. The door of the pew had fallen ajar: he opened it carelessly and looked in. It was too dark for him to see that the cushions were stained with wet from Alex's cloak, or that there were tiny footprints in the dust of the floor. He saw that no one was seated on the cushions, and never thought to look beneath the seat, where a white face and wild eyes were hidden away, and where a slender, trembling figure crouched in a deadly terror.

Whistling softly to himself, he passed on. At the door of the chapel he halted again for some little time, and Alex dared not stir. Finally the door was closed softly, and he departed.

The girl did not emerge from her concealment until quite sure that he would not return. Then she crept out, brushed the dust from her wet garments, and stole into the aisle. She did not breathe freely until she had reached the outer ruins, and she did not linger here. Carefully avoiding observation, she returned to the colonnade, and walked to and fro in feverish excitement.

It was nearly an hour after that, when she slowly and wearily ascended the stairs to her room. At the upper landing she encountered Pierre Renard, sleek as ever, and calm and inscrutable of visage. She drew aside with involuntary repulsion, and he noticed that her eyes were downcast and her cheeks white as snow.

He regarded her suspiciously.

"Where have you been in the rain, Mademoiselle?" he asked, brusquely.

"I have been walking upon the colonnade," answered Alex, quietly.

She would have passed on, but he barred the way.

"Shall you stay at the castle?" he demanded; "or shall you go to London with the Lady Vivian?"

Alex looked up now, and there was an imperious flash in the sapphire eyes, a haughtiness upon the low, broad brow, a curl of the pale, proud mouth that impressed him singularly, and inspired him with a sudden misgiving and a relentless hatred.

"It can make no difference to Lord Mountheron's valet whether I go or stay," she said, icily. "Stand aside."

An imperious wave of the little hand gave emphasis to the command.

Involuntarily, Renard stepped aside. Alex passed on, entering her own chamber. Renard stared at the door, when she had closed it.

"She knows that I am her enemy," he said to himself. "She knows that I meant to destroy her that day when the *Heron* capsized. She knows too much. I'd give a great deal to know just how much her spying has amounted to. I begin to think that, though she is only a girl, she's dangerous. I'll make a third effort to destroy her—and I won't make a third failure. You're sharp, *my little lady, but you're no match for Pierre Renard!*"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE BRIDE'S ORDEAL.

By MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE DESERTED WIFE," "SELF-MADE," "THE HIDDEN HAND," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A NINE DAYS' WONDER.

> None e'er saw her blush,
> Or change her countenance for this report;
> A heart unspotted is not easily daunted.
> The purest spring is not so free from soil
> As she is clear from evil. SHAKESPEARE.

It was the evening of the same day on which Erma Wolfsohn had been seen by several parties, on her way home, accompanied by one whom they were pleased to designate as a suspicious-looking stranger.

The sun had set, but the after-glow of a warm twilight was shining on river, field and woods in their rich autumnal hues.

Within the spacious kitchen at Darkwood, all was comfortable and cheery.

Old Minty, having finished her household work, sat before the ample, open fireplace, watching her tea-kettle as it hung singing over the blaze, and her Johnny-cake as it baked slowly before the coals.

A square oak table, covered with a clean crash cloth, was set for two people, and provided with a cold leg of pork and a plate of pickled cucumbers.

Old Minty had a habit of talking to herself, which she had acquired in the solitude of her life.

She was mumbling over her cares and troubles even now, as she sat in the warmth and light of the blazing wood fire.

"Not to write to none of us! Not to send no messidge to we dem colored people! 'Bove all, not to come home, when she said she would, in two week!

"She been gone free week last Tuesday mornin', and now it's goin' on four week she's away, and nigh de first ob October!

"People ax me whar she gone, and how long she gwine stay, an' when she comin' back, till my po' ole black face get as hot as if I was bakin' cake ober de fire on Fourth o' July!

"Not as I blames de po' young thing, nor likewise 'spicions her de least bit in de world! No, indeed; but evil-minded people does, an' my mind is troubled an' anxious 'bout her! Sometin''s wrong! Somefin's berry wrong, I kno'."

Such was the burden of old Minty's self-communion, while she sat before the fire, watching and turning her Johnny-cake.

She was interrupted, at length, by the entrance of old Septimus, her fellow-servant, who closed the door behind him, took his pipe from the mantle-piece, filled and lighted it, and sat down in an old chair in the chimney-corner to smoke at his leisure.

"You's late, ole man," remarked Aunt Minty.

"Yes, honey. I was seein' to fings outside, 'parin' for dis sudden change in de wedder! Dere's gwine to be a hard frost to-night, now I tell yer," replied old Septimus, as he removed his pipe for a moment and stuffed his tough, black fore-finger down in the glowing bowl to pack the burning tobacco closer.

"Yes, it's chilly. I been hoberin' ober de fire all de ebenin'," said Minty, shivering.

"Has yer, chile? Well, we's gettin' ole—you an' me—an' naterally we's gettin' chilly."

"'Gettin' ole,' ole man? I fink we's done got ole, long ago."

"Dat's so, chile; but de later de night, de nearer de mornin'; an' de later de winter, de nearer de spring; an' de oler de man an' de 'oman, de nearer to de new life. I'm satisfied, Sister Minty."

"So am I, Brudder Septimus. But please to tell me, Brudder, ober again wat dat pos'-marster said to you dis mornin' when you went arter de molasses."

"Oh, I'll tell yer wen I come back, chile. I aint got time now; I got to go to put some wood on de parlor fire, an' de dinin'-room an' bedroom fires," the old man exclaimed, as he arose and laid his pipe on the mantle-piece.

"De idee ob keepin' fires up all de time, a lookin' for dem wot nebber comes back, nor nebber writes, nor eben sen's no messidge!" sighed Minty.

"It *do* look like lost labor, as I hab been doin' for de las' week or mo'; but den, dough she don't come yet, she might drap down right on top of us, any minute," said Septimus.

"Yes, so she might; an, 'sides which, de fires *do* make de house look mo' cheerful-like," replied Minty.

"So dey do," admitted the old man, as he left the kitchen.

Minty took off the kettle of boiling water, made the tea and set it to drawing, took up her Johnny-cake, cut it in slices, and put it between two hot plates to keep warm on the hearth, and then sat down again to wait.

In a short time Septimus returned and then she put the tea and Johnny-cake on the table, and they sat down to supper.

"Now, ole man, tell me wot de pos'-marster said to yer dis mornin'," said Minty, as she handed him a steaming bowl of tea.

"Wait—till I done—eatin', chile. I nebber could talk an' eat at de same time," replied Septimus, with his mouth full of pork and Johnny-cake.

"Berry well, Brudder Septimus," said Minty, meekly; and thenceforward she kept silence until the end of the meal, when the old man arose, refilled his pipe, lighted it, and sat down in the chimney-corner to smoke.

"Now, will yer tell me wot de pos'-marster say 'bout our young mist'ess gwine away, an' stayin' 'way so long?" inquired Minty.

"Wait—till I done—smokin' my pipe. I nebber could smoke an' talk at de same time," replied Septimus, puffing away between every few words.

"Berry well, Brudder," again meekly responded Minty, beginning to wash up her tea-things, to put them away.

By the time she had made the kitchen tidy, and sat down at the fire with her knitting, her old fellow-servant had finished his pipe, and laid it upon the shelf. So, without waiting to be asked again, or even asking Minty to wait, he cleared his throat and began:

"Pos'-marster mos' break my po' ole heart wid his questions, axin' me wot took my mist'ess away so onexpected; how long she were gwine to stay—w'en we looked for her back, an' sich like. An' me a-stan'in' afore him like an idiwut 'dout bein' able to say nuffin' but, ''Deed I dunno, sir,' to eberything. Tell you 'twas mortifyin'!"

"An' wot else did he say, Brudder Sept?"

"Oh, he tell me dere was her box cho'k full o' letters, two or t'ree times ober, an' how he had to take 'em out an' put 'em into a empty tea-chist an' set 'em up on de highest shelf ob his store to keep 'em safe."

"Ah, Lor, a-me, I wish she would come home! 'Deed I wish she had nebber goed away," sighed Aunt Minty.

"Hush, honey! I hear wheels," said Uncle Septimus.

"No, yer don't. It's yer 'magination, Sept."

"Listen, den. Now!" exclaimed the old man, as the sound of horses' hoofs and carriage-wheels rattled and grated on the rough road that led up to the house front and stopped there.

"Sure nuff! Run, Brudder Sept, an' open de front door!" exclaimed Aunt Minty, as a thundering knock sounded on the iron knocker.

"I shouldn't wonder if it was her herself, as o' course it mus' be, for who else would come at dis hour ob de night?" cried the old man, as he hastily seized a tallow candle that stood in an iron candle-stick on the mantle-piece, lighted it, and left the kitchen.

The peremptory knock was impatiently repeated as he hurried to the front door, drew the bolts and bars, and unlocked and opened it.

The driver of the Red Fox hack stood there, already growling.

"Is yer gwine to keep your mist'ess an' de ge'man stan'in' out here in de cole all night, Brudder Septimus?"

"No, Brudder Simms, I come as fast as ebber I could, an' faster, too!" answered the old man, gently pushing the driver aside to make way for the lady who had just left the hack, and was coming toward the house, followed by a tall, distinguished-looking man.

"How do you do, Septimus? Is all well with you?" inquired the sweet voice of Erma, as she stepped upon the threshold.

"Yes, Mist'ess, all is well, an' mighty glad to see yer, young Mist'ess, an' de fires is all a burnin' lively, an' Minty settin' up waitin' for yer, as has been de case dese eight or nine days past, since we has been lookin' for yer back."

"Ah! you have taken a great deal of needless trouble, and I thank you both, but I am sorry, Septimus," said the lady, gently.

"We don't mind de trouble, Mist'ess. Nebber mind dat, so's yer's back safe, t'ank de Lord."

"I suppose there are a great many letters waiting for me here, Septimus?"

"Yes, Mist'ess, dere's piles and piles."

"Bring them to me in the parlor immediately."

"But, my dear Mist'ess, dey's in de pos'-office."

"'In the post-office?' Why have you left them there?" demanded the lady, with a look of disappointment.

"My dear Mist'ess, I couldn't 'sume to take dem out in your absence 'dout your orders."

"I am sorry for that; but, of course, you acted for the best. You must go for them early to-morrow."

"I'll be sure to do so, Mist'ess."

As they talked, Erma had passed into the hall, followed by the handsome stranger.

"There is a fire in the parlor, you say, Septimus?" she inquired.

"Yes, Mist'ess, kept up day and night since ebber we 'spected of yer home," replied the man, opening the door on the right to admit the travellers into the same sitting-room, into which Erma herself had been introduced on her first arrival as a bride at Darkwood, the room upholstered in faded yellow moreen, and having the old-fashioned centre-table in the middle, covered with equally old-fashioned annuals and illustrated books and faded daguerreotypes in morocco cases.

"Sit down here and rest," said Erma, in low tones, addressed to the stranger as she drew a large easy-chair toward the blazing wood fire.

("He's her brudder or somefin," said old Septimus, to himself).

The distinguished-looking stranger sank silently into the offered seat.

Old Septimus, from the tallow candle in his own hand, lighted the wax candles on the mantle-piece, and the astral lamp that stood on the centre-table, and then turned to look at the stranger again.

Certainly, the distinction of his appearance was not due to his habiliments. He was clothed in the coarsest "pepper and salt" cassinet cloth, such as the winter wear of the plantation negroes was made of. His linen was also coarse, and the hat that he set down beside his chair was but a rough-and-ready broad-brimmed straw one.

It was his face and head, his air and gait, to which "distinction" appertained.

His features were of the high Roman type, with the lofty brow, eagle eye, aquiline nose, short upper lip, perfectly moulded mouth and rounded up protruding chin. This could be seen or guessed even under his beard, for his dark, fine face was framed in with long, black, silky, curling hair and beard. In this particular he bore some superficial resemblance to the absent master of the house; but then the stranger's hair was pure black, while that of Rodolph Wolfsohn had red lights in the sunshine.

"Septimus," said Mrs. Wolfsohn, "go and call Minty to attend me, and do you also come back to show this—this man to the furnished room in the attic and there attend to his wants. He is Mr. Aleyn, our new overseer, and he will remain in the house and take his meals at my table until the overseer's cottage can be made ready for him," concluded the lady, as she stood, somewhat embarrassed, even in speaking to her simple and respectful old servant, and pulling and tugging at her tight glove in getting it off, as if to cover her confusion.

"Berry well, Mist'ess," said the old man, going out to do her errand.

No sooner had the old man left the room than—with the curiosity of a child unconscious of wrong-doing—he knelt softly upon the floor and peeped through the keyhole. That small opening commanded the range before the fireplace and the stranger sitting there.

This was what old Septimus saw:

Erma Wolfsohn came forward, stood for a moment in front of the stranger, and then sank on her knees at his feet and took both his hands and pressed them to her lips and to her heart, while her tears fell fast upon them, and her voice murmured, brokenly.

"Welcome! Welcome! Oh, the happiness of having you here with me!"

A change had come over the stranger, too. His erect form seemed suddenly to have collapsed, his stately head dropped on his chest, his shoulders curved and bowed, his hands trembled, and his voice faltered as he said:

"But, Erma, my safety may be your destruction, my asylum your grave."

"No, no, no, no! Long suffering has disturbed your clear judgment. *I* run no risks. And if I did, what of that? This is your ark of salvation, your haven of rest. Here you may abide unquestioned, unsuspected. I was directed by my husband to procure an overseer to look after the plantation in his absence. I have found one to suit me. That is all the world need know. You will be safe. Oh, my dearest, dearest—"

Old Septimus, absorbed as he was in listening, heard no more, for, at that instant, a groping hand found his woolly head in the dark, and a quavering voice exclaimed:

"Why, Sept, ole man, I like to a stumbled ober yer. Wot's yer doin' here, settin' down a rubbin' yer rheumatizy shins on de mist'ess's door-mat?"

"I—I was comin' arter you, Sister Minty. De mist'ess calls for yer," said old Sept, in a great fright at having been caught by the unsuspicious old Minty.

He recovered his self-possession, however, and rapped at the door.

"Enter," murmured the soft voice of the lady, from within.

They opened the door and went in.

Erma was standing with her hand on the corner of the mantle-piece, and the stranger was sitting in the arm-chair, no longer collapsed and bowed, but erect and self-possessed.

"Now, Septimus, take one of these candles and light Mr. Aleyn to his room; supply him with all that he needs, and kindle a fire, if he wishes one. And you, Minty, come with me to my chamber," said Mrs. Wolfsohn, as she took one of the candles from the mantle-piece and put it in the hand of her woman.

The two servants obeyed these directions, and the whole party left the room.

Septimus, conducting the stranger, led the way up the first flight of stairs, and thence up into the attic.

Erma, attended by Minty, followed them as far as the first floor, and then turned aside to her own well-warmed and well-lighted chamber, whose blazing wood fire illumined the whole room with the brilliancy of a dozen chandeliers.

"You'll find ebery fing here, Mist'ess, ready for yer, as I hab kept it so ebber since we begun to look for yer home," said Minty, as she drew forward the big arm-chair for her mistress's accommodation.

"And the water in the ewers, Minty? How long has it been standing here?" inquired the lady, lifting one of the tall, blue china pitchers and looking into it.

"Only dis ebenin' my Mist'ess. I hab changed de water in de jugs ebery ebenin' since we been lookin' for yer home."

"Then I have all I want. And you, Minty, may go and get some supper ready for me and—and the overseer. Do not be long, but get the best you can in the shortest space of time," said Mrs. Wolfsohn, dismissing her attendant.

"And she nebber ax me how nobody was, nor how fings was goin' on, nor nuffin wot any lady would want to kno' arter being away so long," said old Minty to her fellow-servant, whom she encountered on the stairs, as she went down.

"Nor likewise didn't *he* talk much, nor want no waitin' on, but sent me right out'n de room soon's ebber he foun' out he had f'esh water and clean towels nuff for his wash," added Septimus.

"Tell yer wot, ole man, mist'ess has got somefin' on her mine," said Minty, with a sigh.

"*I kno' she has*," added Septimus, significantly.

"What does yer kno', Brudder Septimus?" inquired Minty, as they reached the kitchen.

"Me! I don't kno' nuffin special. I o'ny kno' as mist'ess hab got somefin on her mine! Dat's all! (I must'n't tell wot I seen wid my own eyes, 'cause I's feared *dat* sight wasn't got *fair*, an' so I must hole my tongue about *dat*,") added the old man to himself.

"Come now, Sept! Fly 'round, ole man, and help me to get supper," said Minty.

"Yes. What mus' I do?"

"Slice some new ham thin for me to grill. Den go set de table while I grills it, an' poaches de eggs, an' toases de bread."

Sept took a plate and a carving-knife from the dresser, reached down the bunch of keys from their peg and went out to the store-room.

While these preparations for supper were going on in the kitchen, Erma Wolfsohn made a hasty toilet and came out of her room and stood at the foot of the stairs waiting for the stranger to descend.

He came at length with feeble steps and stooping figure, at strange variance with his free movements and upright form when first we saw him, scarcely half an hour before.

"Come down with me to the parlor. Lean on my arm. Are you very weary to-night?" said Erma, with reverential tenderness as she offered him her hand.

"No, no, dear! Only a little, from the long ride; supper and a night's rest will restore me," he answered, as he came down the last of the attic steps; and laying his hand, not within her offered arm, for he was too tall for that, but on her shoulder, for support, he passed with her along the upper hall and down the stairs to the parlor, where she made him sit down in the large easy-chair, on one side of the cheerful fire.

She drew a chair to the opposite side and seated herself.

Between them, but a little farther back, stood the old-fashioned centre-table, lighted by its astral lamp and covered with time-worn annuals, illustrated books and daguerreotypes.

Erma, observing the paleness of her guest's face and the languor of his manner, that he did not exert himself to conceal, now that no other eye than hers was upon him, arose and went to the cupboard on the right of the fireplace and took up a decanter of old port wine, which had stood there undisturbed ever since she had first come to the house, poured out a glassful and turned to offer it to her guest, when a startling cry from the latter suddenly arrested her action.

He held an open daguerreotype-case in his hand and was gazing at the pictured features there, with ashen face and starting eyes, full of terror, agony and deep remorse.

"*Oh, I never thought of that!*" moaned Erma, as she staggered back for a moment.

Then, recovering herself, she went up to him and gently took the case from his hand.

"Where—where did *that* come from?" inquired Aleyn, in an expiring voice, as he sank half fainting back in his chair.

"I—I do not know. It has been here ever since I first came to the house," replied Erma, speaking the literal truth; for, of course, she did not know at what gallery or in what city the picture had been taken; yet, nevertheless, she felt guilty of evasion.

"Do not prevaricate with me, Erma," said the stranger, in a mournfully reproachful voice. "*How came* this picture here?"

"*Indeed*, I do not know," replied the young lady, with equal truth—for certainly she was ignorant as to the person who had brought the picture to Darkwood—and with equal compunction for a real or fancied evasion of the question.

"Erma! was this—*man*—your husband's friend? Answer me that," he said, speaking with difficulty, and, in the first words, with a choking voice.

"No, indeed, he was no friend of my husband's. That, at least, I *can* tell you," said the girl, with more promptness and assurance than she had yet spoken.

"Then accident, caprice or the devil has thrown it in my way! Lock it up, Erma. Hide it. Let me never look upon it again," he said, in growing excitement.

"You never shall," replied the lady; and taking the tongs, she made a pit in the hottest depths of the glowing hickory coals and dropped the daguerreotype of Gustave Perlemonte in the midst and covered it with fire.

A low laugh, full of pain and mockery, not of mirth or triumph, issued from the pallid lips of the stranger.

"Take this glass of wine; it will restore you," said Erma, taking up the stimulant and pressing it upon him.

He received it with a trembling hand and sipped it slowly and with some difficulty in swallowing. When he had emptied the glass, he put it down on the table, and, turning to his companion, said:

"Erma, you may wonder at having seen me so moved by the sight of that old daguerreotype; but if you knew whom it was like—yes, as much like as if he had sat for it, you would wonder no longer. Erma, you never saw—*Gustave Perlemonte*—but this stranger's daguerrotype was the exact image of—*Gustave Perlemonte*."

And every time he uttered that name it was with hesitation, and then a gasp, as if the ordeal was too much for his nerve.

"Think no more about it, sir. Oh, think no more about it. You never intended to—"

A rap at the door interrupted Erma's words.

Old Septimus had come to announce supper.

The young hostess arose and invited her guest to follow her to the dining-room.

Aunt Minty had done her best, under the circumstances, and had set before her mistress and the stranger an appetizing supper of fragrant tea and coffee, fresh milk and butter, biscuits and rice cakes, grilled ham, poached eggs, and cake and preserves.

But, to Aunt Minty's disappointment and Uncle Sept's disgust, neither Erma nor her visitor did full justice to the good things. A cup of tea and a bit of biscuit formed Erma's meal; a cup of coffee, a poached egg, and a rice cake the stranger's.

CHAPTER XXIV.

DEVOTION.

> Thought ye, your iron hands of pride
> Could break the knot that nature tied?
> No! Let the eagle change his plume,
> The leaf its hue, the flower its bloom;
> But ties around the heart are spun,
> That could not, would not, be undone!
> CAMPBELL.

Almost immediately after supper, the guest, making his apology to the hostess, retired to his attic chamber.

Then Erma called old Septimus to her presence, and said:

"You tell me that you have never brought *any* letters home from the post-office since I went away?"

"Yes, young Mist'ess, I tole yer so. I aint fotch *no* letters home fo'm de pos'-office, 'cause I wouldn't 'sume to do sich a fing 'dout yer orders, an' yer nebber gib me no orders to dat defec'," answered the old man.

"I never thought of it, in the suddenness and confusion of my departure. Now I am paying the penalty of my thoughtlessness, in having to wait until to-morrow before I can get my letters from friends of whom I have not heard for more than three weeks," exclaimed Erma, speaking out her "grief" and her "impatience," and to herself, rather than to the old servant.

But he replied in a consoling tone:

"Well, Mist'ess, I'll rise up 'fore day to-morrow mornin', so's to get to Ice Cliff by de time de pos'-office is open, an' soon's ebber I get de letters I'll ride home fas' as ole Henry can trabel. An' I tell yer, my young Mist'ess, yer'll get get a pile. Dey hab been 'cumulatin' to dat destent de pos'-marster had to take 'em out'n de letter-box an' pack 'em away in an ole tea-chist on de top shelf ob his shop. Yer shall hab yer letters on de table wid yer coffee and muffins when yer come down stairs to-morrow mornin'."

"Thank you, Uncle Sept. And now, as you will have to rise so early, you had better retire at once. Good-night."

"Good-night, my dear young Mist'ess," said the old man, bowing low.

Erma left the room.

Old Septimus watched her ascend the stairs, and then shook his gray head portentously, murmuring:

"It's berry 'sterious! Berry 'sterious, indeed! Oh, I hopes my dear young mist'ess won't come to no harm! I wonder wot it do mean? I reckon I do kno'! Dis man is some poor 'lation ob her' own, wot haint got no money, nor no bizness, an so she takes him in here to work for his libin', an' she 'shamed to let on as he's her own born, blood 'lation! Dat's it! Dat's it! I jes' ought to a knowed it 'fore! An' now I has foun' it out, 'doubt her consent; I'll nebber tell nobody, not eben Minty! Dere! He's mist'ess's 'lation! But, oh, won't she hab to be mighty particular an' not make much of him, even if he is her 'lation? 'cause if she does, Oh! won't de ole wimmin talk! Mist'ess will jes' hab to keep her 'lation in his place as de oberseer, an' no mo' nor less; or else she'll hab to own up as he *is* her 'lation, an' wot sort ob a 'lation, too, to 'count for her making so much ob him! I wish somebody would 'vise dat young gal, wot haint no mudder nor farder to do it, an' her husban' gone to de big wars! 'Deed, I feels like prayin' for one in miniminit purril! I does! An' de 'spicions ob de people is decited by her goin' 'way so strange a'ready! 'Deed nex' love feas' I gwine to ax de brudderin to pray for de soul ob one in miniminit purril! I needn't name no names."

So resolving, Uncle Septimus proceeded to close up the house, cover up the fires, and put out the lights.

After which he went to bed and to sleep.

In the meantime, Erma had gone up to her own chamber, where she found a good fire burning and old Minty in attendance.

"Well, Aunty," said Erma, as she dropped wearily into the large arm-chair, "I wish you to tell me how all our neighbors are, and what has happened since I have been gone."

Poor Erma asked this for the sake of finding out, indirectly, if she could, what construction the little community had put upon her sudden and unexplained departure. She was morbidly anxious upon this point, and we must not criticise her conduct in questioning her own servant. Old Aunt Minty, the humble negro woman, was much more worthy of her confidence than many a well-born lady or gentleman would have been.

"Well, my Mist'ess," began the old woman.

"Sit down, Minty. Draw up that little flag-bottom chair, and make yourself comfortable. You are too old and too weary with your day's work to stand while you answer me."

"T'anky, my Mist'ess. You's berry 'siderate ob ole people, dough I hardly fink it is proper fur me to sit in your presence, an' wouldn't do it if I wa'n't jes' ready to drap," said the woman, with a pathetic, deprecating smile as she took the permitted seat.

"How are the Blantyres, Aunt Minty?"

"Yes, Mist'ess, dey's all well, I hear, an' de fambly school is flourishin', dough dey do seem to hab a dreat deal o' trouble wid poor, misfortunate Miss Bab Bibb. But what can dey 'spect ob dat poor moderless baby, fotch up as she is. Miss Susan Blantyre say how she mean to keep her in de school dough, an' do de bes' she can by her."

"Mrs. Blantyre is so truly good! And talking of Bab Bibb—how are all the family at The Marsh?"

"He! he! he!—He! he! he!" laughed old Minty, in a soft, low, deprecating way.

"Why, what amuses you, Aunty?" inquired her mistress, with an indulgent smile.

"Oh, my Mist'ess! 'Taint many fings as can 'muse me, at my time o' life; but dis yere is too funny!"

"What is it, Aunt Minty?"

"Why, yer know Miss Adder Mesh?"

"Certainly: What of her?"

"Well, de 'port is, dat Mr. Walter Lambe, from de Ma'sh, is payin' his distressful detentions to Miss Mesh, at Brighthome. He! he! he!"

"Mr. Lambe paying attention to Miss Mesh!" exclaimed Erma, in surprise.

"Such is de 'port, Mist'ess."

"Cousin Wally courting Ada Mesh? Oh never!"

"But such is de 'port, Mist'ess. An' Brudder Sept say, yer ought to a seen Miss Barbra Gunn's face when she fus' heerd it. Uncle Sept was at de Ma'sh when de news fus' come. Uncle Jug, from Brighthome, fus' brought it—tells Miss Barbra how Mr. Walter Lambe was dere two or t'ree times a week a courtin' Miss Mesh. And Miss Gunn went off into such a passion dat she had one ob her ole turns—heart beatin' in de back ob her head, you know, Mist'ess—which must be a dreffui fing."

"I should think so."

"An' had to set right down in de chair an' be bled a quart 'fore she got ober it," concluded old Minty.

And still Erma had not heard what she wished most to hear—what construction her neighbors put upon her conduct.

"Mr. Clement Gladden and his family are well, I hope?"

"Oh, yes, Mist'ess, berry well."

"I wonder what he thinks of Cousin Wally Lambe's courtship," said Erma, with a slight smile, and speaking more to herself than to her companion.

"Oh! He? He 'courages ob it, wid all his heart. Laws, Mist'ess, eberybody knows ole Marse' Clement Gladden's good heart. He 'courages ob 'em. Leastways, so Uncle Jug 'ports."

"But to what end? They cannot marry. Neither of them have a dollar to live on."

"Dat's wot Brudder Sept say Miss Barbra Gunn say wen she first hear it. She say:

"'Wally Lambe, what hab *you* got to s'port a family?'

"An' Marse' Wally he couldn't say nuffin. An' den she ax him:

"'How you spects to get along?'

"Den Marse' Wally Lambe he plucks up a little courage an' he answer her back ag'in:

"'I spects, ef as how I marries ob de lubly Miss Mesh, we can get along like udder people do.'"

Erma forgot her troubles in a hearty laugh at this characteristic speech of the simple, unthinking and improvident Cousin Wally. He was quite capable of marrying Miss Mesh, if she would have him, under such circumstances—without knowing where or how they would live, even for the first week of their honeymoon.

"Well, my Mist'ess, dat 'get along like udder people do,' 'dout a cent ob money to start wid, was wot gib Miss Barbra her ill turn, and started her heart up to beatin' in de back ob her head, so she had to sit right down an' be bled a quart. An' 'deed, my dear Mist'ess, we must 'fess, as it would a made de most ob us commit sin, to hear a man like ole Mr. Wally talk dat way 'bout gettin' married on nuffin! 'Get along like udder people,' indeed!" repeated the old woman.

And *still* Erma heard not what she longed most to hear—what her neighbors said of her.

Indeed, old Minty was not likely to have repeated anything that would have given her beloved young mistress pain.

Erma asked no more questions, but changed the conversation by saying:

"I wish to call your attention to our new overseer, Aunt Minty."

"Yes, Mist'ess."

"He is not a common man."

"I seed dat, Mist'ess, f'om de fust."

"He is a gentleman in reduced circumstances."

Minty looked puzzled. She did not quite understand what was meant by "reduced circumstances."

"He has come to poverty," amended Erma.

"Yes, Mist'ess, so I s'posed, or he wouldn't come down to be an oberseer," replied the old woman, respectfully.

"But he will not make a worse overseer on that account, I hope, but rather a better one, indeed."

"Yes, Mist'ess, but it 'pends on wot fotch him down to poverty. Ef drink, or gamblin', or de like, had any hand in it, I wouldn't *ree*-commend him, my dear young Mist'ess."

"He is sober and honest I hear. Of course, I should not have taken any dissipated man, even if he was a reduced gentleman, as an overseer."

"O' course not, my Mist'ess."

"What I wish to say to you, Minty, is, that as the new overseer happens to be a gentleman, I wish to have him treated with the respect due to his position."

"Ob course, Mist'ess. Yer needn't be doubtful in yer mine 'bout dat, young Mist'ess. A *real* gemman, like dis gemman, allers 'ceives 'spect f'om us colored people, no matter *how* po' an' lone he is."

"I know it," said Erma, softly. "And now, Aunt Minty, go to bed and take your rest. You need it."

"Can't I do nuffin else for you, young Mist'ess? Help you to undress, nor nuffin?"

"No, I thank you, Aunt Minty. Your forethought has done every possible thing for me already. Good-night."

So Erma dismissed her old servant.

She listened until she heard the retreating footsteps of the old woman die away in the distant back passages below stairs. When all was silent she arose and left her room, went softly up the attic stairs, paused before the door of her mysterious guest, and knelt down and held her breath to catch any movement from within. Presently her acute ears caught the sound of the regular breathing of the tenant within the chamber.

"He sleeps—he sleeps! Thank fortune, he sleeps well!" she murmured to herself, as she softly arose to her feet and silently stole away.

She returned to her own room and retired to bed, where, fatigued by a long week's journey, she, too, soon fell asleep.

Erma slept long and deeply. She did not awake until she was aroused by a low rapping at her door.

"Who is it? And what is wanted?" she inquired, still half-asleep.

"It is me, Mist'ess—Minty. It is late, Mist'ess, nine o'clock; and Uncle Sept has come back from de pos'-office, and I has fotch yer letters up to yer."

Erma sprang out of bed, wide awake now, and quickly enough.

"Give them to me!" she eagerly exclaimed, opening the door.

Old Minty handed the crowded mail-bag to her mistress and then came into the room, knelt down on the hearth and began to kindle up the fire which had nearly burnt out, and to replenish it with wood from a box in the corner.

Meanwhile, Erma threw herself into the large easy-chair, unlocked her bag, and emptied its contents upon the table at her side.

There were some newspapers, and more than a dozen letters.

All these latter were from her husband, and had been written daily from every stopping-place along the line of march.

Erma hurriedly looked over the dates in the postmarks on the backs of the letters and seized upon the letter with latest date to open first, that she might have the latest news of her husband at once.

The other letters, she thought, she could afterward read at her leisure.

This was dated at St. Louis, and informed her that the march had been too rapid to allow him to wait in any place long enough to receive a letter from her; that, consequently, though he had written many to her, he had had none from her since that one written on the evening of the day of his departure, describing the company of neighbors that had come in to comfort her for his absence, which had reached him at Washington.

He then requested her to direct her next letter to Fort Leavenworth, where the regiment would remain for a week or more. He concluded with the most earnest entreaties that she would take care of her precious health and keep up her spirits, and with assurances of everlasting affection.

Over and over Erma read this letter, almost forgetful of the guest who had interested her so much.

"I could not write to Rodolph, during my absence, because I could not explain my absence. How fortunate, then, that his march was so rapid, after leaving Washington, that he did not even expect to get one from me!" she mused.

Then suddenly remembering her guest, she said:

"Has Mr. Aleyn come down yet?"

"No, Mist'ess, he habn't. Sept, he took up his hot water and his blacked boots, and put dem outside ob de door, an' rapped 'bout an hour ago; but wen he went up 'jis' now to see if Mr. Aleyn didn't want nuffin, dere was de water settin' outside de door, cole as a stone, an' de boots dere, too. Sept didn't take de liberty to wake de gemman up, Mist'ess, long as yer wasn't down stairs yerse'f. But now, Mist'ess, shall I go tell Sept to call de gemman? I do reckon as he has obersleeped hisse'f, like you did, Mist'ess."

"Then let him sleep on. Hand me my dressing-gown and slippers, and I will sit here and read the rest of my letters. And— Has Uncle Septimus had his breakfast?"

"Oh, yes, mist'ess. De ole man was up long 'fore daylight an' got his own breakfas' an' eat it good, 'fore ebber he started off to Ice Cliff. Law, mist'ess, you don't ebber catch ole Uncle Septimus ridin' out on a fastin' stummik dese mornin's. He's too 'fraid o' mashmire."

"There *is* miasma at this season, even here. But, Minty, since Sept has had his breakfast, tell him from me to go down and open and air the overseer's cottage, and if it wants any repairs that *he* can make, to go over to Blantyre House and borrow a box of carpenter's tools. Tell him he may take the light wagon and horse to bring them with, if necessary."

"Yes, Mist'ess," said the woman, as she left the room.

Comfortably wrapped in her dressing gown, with her feet in soft slippers, Erma sat in her easy-chair before the fire and gave herself up to the delight of reading that pile of her husband's letters.

She had been half an hour at this congenial employment, but had not got half through, when she heard her "new overseer" coming slowly down the attic steps.

She put aside her heap of letters and hastily arose and dressed herself.

She went down to the parlor where she found Aleyn sitting beside the centre-table in front of the fire, looking listlessly over an old copy of "Heath's Book of Beauty."

He arose, laid down the book, opened his arms, and folded her to his bosom, saying, in a voice vibrating with the deepest emotion:

"My angel! My angel! It is to *your* heroic and unparalleled devotion that I owe this present peace and safety."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE VILLAGE AUTOCRAT.

Recently, in looking over an old volume of Parliamentary Reports, I came across a speech made by a member from Liverpool, named Wallace. With a degree of self-complacency that was truly refreshing, he propounded the following bit of logic by way of proving the general superiority of England:

> "It has been truly said that he who commands the sea, commands the commerce of the world; that he who commands the commerce of the world, commands the wealth of the world; and, surely, he who can command the wealth of the world, must command the world itself. I venture to say no man will dispute that England commands the sea."

I smiled as I read, not so much at the bold logic of Mr. Wallace, as at the memory of an incident which his argument recalled to my mind.

Years ago, an old pedagogue, named Kelly, kept the village school in Yagger, a thriving manufacturing settlement on a tributary of the Androscoggin River, in Maine. In the village was a large, new hall, of which the citizens were very proud, and which they were determined to preserve from rough and wearing uses. The time came when a Thespian Club wished very much to use the hall for a series of dramatic entertainments—to erect a stage, and put up scenery, etc.; but their proposition to the trustees met with a stern and uncompromising refusal. Said old Kelly, when he heard of it:

"I think I could get the hall for you—that is, if you will promise not to drive nails into the wall, nor to otherwise mar or disfigure the property." This the committee of the club promised most solemnly.

But they had little faith in the ability of the simple-minded pedagogue to accomplish the end he had undertaken. What influence could he have with the stiff-necked trustees?

Attending the village school was a certain little "Bobby" Shaftwell, so called—a bright-faced, forward, precocious hero of six years, whose mother literally worshiped him; and this boy regarded his teacher as a very monarch. By one of those peculiar psychological affinities for which there is no accounting, little Bobby had come to worship his kind old teacher almost as ardently as his mamma worshiped him.

To little Bobby the pedagogue appealed. "Really, my dear boy," he said, "I should like to have you see the club perform the drama of 'William Tell.' I know that it would please you to witness the performance, and I believe your good mother would enjoy, not only pleasing you, but also the play itself."

He ventured no further, and there was no need. Two days later, the chairman of the Thespian Club committee was informed that he could have the use of the hall; and two weeks later still, the club performed "William Tell, the Hero of Switzerland," upon a spacious stage in the grand village hall.

"Goodness mercy, Mr. Kelly, how did you do it?" asked one of the Thespians.

Upon promise of strict secrecy the pedagogue elucidated as follows:

"My dear young friend, the whole thing is very simple. I govern the village school, and in doing that I govern an only son who completely governs his mother. This mother, in turn, as with a rod of iron, governs her husband; and this husband, being the wealthiest man in the place—the leading spirit, in fact—regulates and controls the affairs of the town and of the parish. *Ergo—I am Autocrat of the Village!* Don't you see?"

The Thespian saw, and was thankful that it was so.

S. C., JR.

ELAINE.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

Just when her spring was at its best,
With bloom and song and sunshine rife—
When in her sweet soul unconfessed,
Love bode, a rosy, smiling guest—
The budding grace, the morning zest,
The thronging pulses' joyous strife,
The mystery that we call *life*.
Was stilled within her gentle breast!

"She lies like some fair flower," I said,
"After the sunshine bright as brief;
Folded in happy sleep—not dead—
As folds a white rose, leaf on leaf,
When twilight's chilly dews are shed—
Unheedful of my love and grief,
Folded in happy sleep!" I said.

"By some sweet spell of peace possessed,
Stirless she lies, from chin to feet,
In many a fragrant, snowy fold,
Her vesture drawn; half-blown and sweet,
Her hands a fair cognizance hold—
A lily and a rose entwined,
As if some tender soul divined
The symbol of her life most meet!

"Her locks just touched with morning gold,
Wreathed like a nimbus round her head—
Rosemary on her pillow spread—
Fair as some poet's dream of old
By an Immortal's art expressed
In sculptured beauty's rarest mould,
A sleeping vestal, chaste and cold—
Unsullied innocence at rest,
And all in maiden whiteness drest,
Folded in happy dreams—not dead—
My darling lies," I said.

THE BERTRAM CLOCK.

BY CAROLINE CONRAD.

Madam Bertram was a childless widow and rich. Cliff and Erla Bertram were two orphans, remote cousins to each other, and distantly related to madam's deceased husband. Madam wished them to be her heirs, took them to live with her at Bertram Heights, while children, and hoped they would marry as soon as they were old enough.

The Bertram clock had been made, long before, by a Bertram, who had a passion for mechanics, and it was considered a great curiosity.

It was built to represent a castle, with turrets and towers and queer little pointed windows. It stood at the end of the great hall, and was large enough for several men to stand inside.

There was a tradition, that, originally, the tall ebony door in front used to open precisely at half-past three P. M., and a procession come forth, bearing a coffin and chanting the burial service. But the ebony door was locked now, and no one ever tried to open it. The key, indeed, was said to have been lost long ago, and the great, beautiful ivory hands of the clock had stopped at half-past three.

"Because its maker died at that hour, a hundred years ago," said Felix, the old family steward, to the children. "They have never moved since. And they do say that whoever can make those hands move again, will be the greatest Bertram yet."

"Cliff will do it when he gets big, you will see," said Erla, confidently. "Cliff can do anything, and he is to marry me, madam says, and we are to live at Bertram Heights always. So, he will have plenty of time."

"Heaven grant that I may live to see them married," sighed madam, who had heard this.

But she did not. She died when Cliff was twenty and Erla seventeen.

In less than a month after, trouble began.

A very ugly, little old man appeared at Bertram Heights, one morning, calling himself madam's heir, and Cliff and Erla interlopers.

"Madam did have a brother," said Erla.

"But he died," returned Cliff. "I have often heard her talk about it. He died out there in India. Erla, I am sure this is not madam's brother, but we cannot prove it. He says *you* may stay if you like. I will go and see what I can find out about him, and about the other's death, and come back to you."

"But I can't stay here without you," sobbed Erla.

"Oh, yes you can. If you do not, there is nowhere else you can go, and he will make us both beggers. We cannot help ourselves."

"He will make me marry that yellow little boy of his. I knew he will."

The "yellow little boy," was a man of twenty-five, but shorter of stature than his father, and uglier if possible.

"He cannot make you; you are your own mistress," said Cliff; "and whether I succeed or not, I will come back to you in a year. I shall be twenty-one then."

"Will you surely come?"

"A year from to-day, at half-past three," he said, laughing as he pointed at the old clock, "I will be here. The train comes in at two. Look for me after that."

"If you do not come, I shall die. Mind that. I shall die," said Erla, solemnly.

She was right in being afraid of madam's pretended brother and his "little boy," as she scornfully called him.

Cliff had not been gone two weeks, before they began worrying her about marrying the son, who called himself Rupert Devere.

Madam had been a Devere before she married. When they found coaxing would not do, they resorted to sterner measures, trying by threats, and every means short of personal violence, to subdue her to their wishes. But she only laughed at them.

"I am going to marry Cliff," she said. "In a year from the day he went away, he is coming for me."

They started and looked at each other when she said that.

"He must never come here again," said the father to the son, when they were alone. And from that hour they watched for him like assassins.

"He will never come," they said to Erla.

"I am so sure that he will," the girl answered defiantly, "that I am willing to promise you now, to marry Rupert if he does not."

Ah! how they watched for him then.

As the day approached on which Cliff had said he would come, father and son made ostentatious preparations for the wedding they meant should take place on that day.

Erla smiled in scorn.

"You are very kind," she said, "to take so much trouble for my marriage to Cliff."

On the morning of that day, she rose and dressed herself gayly in white, and adorned herself with flowers.

"He will come," she said, "and he likes to see me so."

But she was whiter than the lilies on her breast. Rupert watched her as she leaned from one of the tall casements and looked away toward the station.

He thought he had never in his life seen anything so fair as Erla, in her white dress, with the lilies in her hair and on her breast, and he went up to her smiling with his great ugly mouth.

"Sweet Erla," he said, "he will not come, I know he will not, and you have promised to be my wife if he does not."

"He will come if he is alive," said Erla, looking at him with her beautiful steady eyes.

"Alive?" stammered Rupert, turning pale.

Then she leaned from the window again.

It was two o'clock, and she could see the smoke of the incoming train curling up through the trees.

"He can come from the station in half an hour," she said, putting her hand to her heart.

But the half hour did not bring him.

Looking round she saw Rupert standing in a dark corner, his face white, his lips sneering.

"There is a whole hour yet," she said, lifting her eyes to where the old clock pointed its moveless hands at half-past three. But the sweet eyes were anxious, the delicate lips quivered a little.

Rupert crossed over to her.

"He will never come; you know it," he said. "He could easily have been here by this. He has forgotten you."

Erla turned upon him haughtily:

"He will come," she said. "I am as sure of it, as that I see my dear madam's clock there," and she went toward it.

Rupert followed her.

"The priest will be here at half-past three," he said. "If Cliff Bertram has not come by then, you are to marry me."

Erla did not answer, but went and pressed her mouth against the ebony door of the clock.

"Dear, old clock," she whispered, "bring him back to me."

Then it seemed to her that she heard a sound of movement behind the door.

"There is some one in there," she said, with her white lips. "I should not wonder if it were he."

Rupert laughed aloud.

"Listen!" said Erla, solemnly.

Then they both heard a sound as if the great golden pendulum had begun to tick, and then there was a whiz and buzz. "*One, two,*" rang out a sweet, silver bell somewhere. The old clock that had not spoken in a hundred years, had struck the half-hour.

Rupert was staring with starting eyes at the great white hands upon the topmost tower.

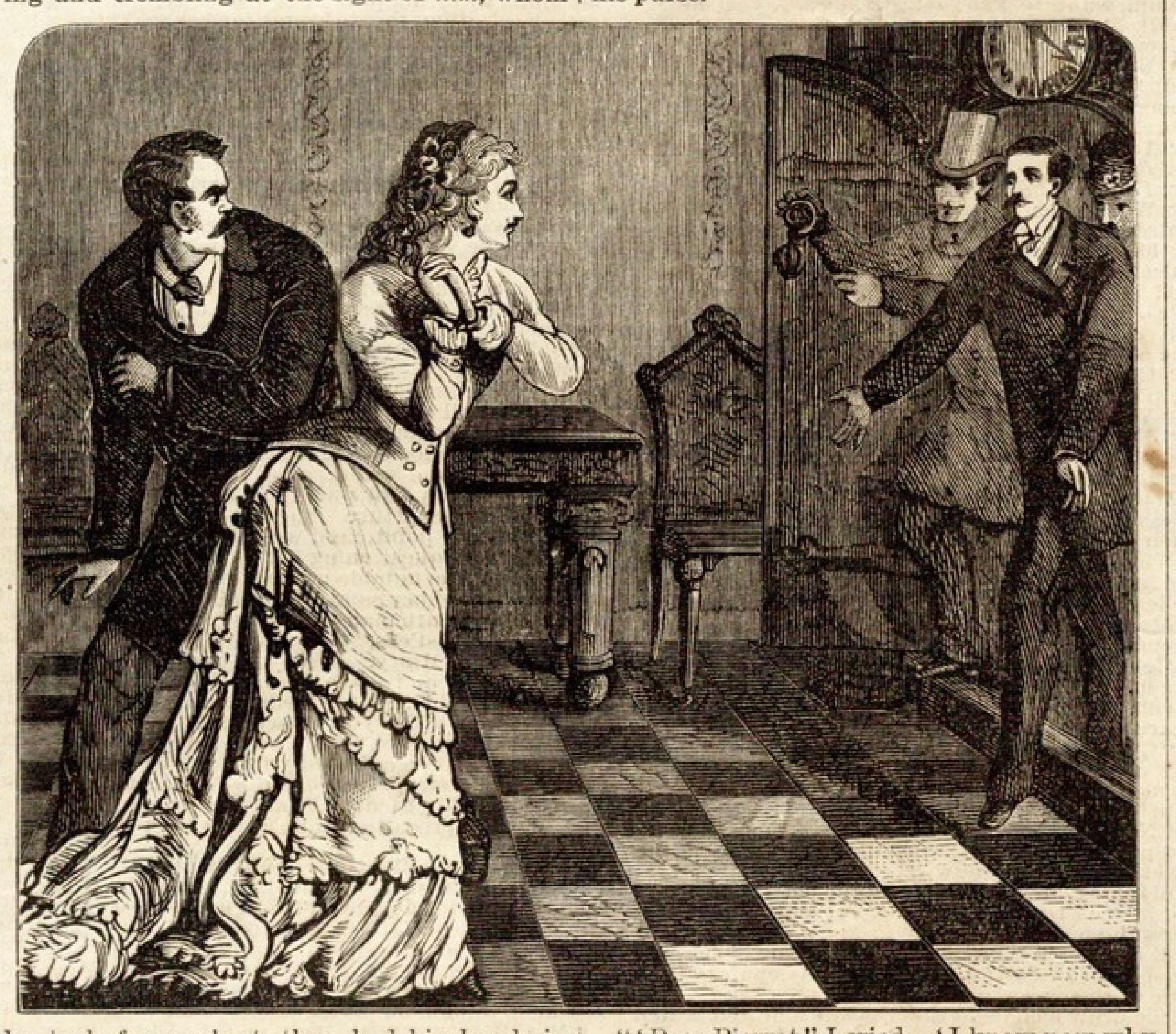
"*It moves,*" he said, in a hollow whisper.

Erla's eyes were fastened on the ebony door. *It* moved, too—a little, and a little more, as if its hinges were stiff and slow with long disuse.

She stood with her hands clasped, her sweet face in a breathless agitation.

"Cliff, oh Cliff, is it you?" she whispered.

The door was wide open now, and in it Cliff Bertram stood, tall, straight and smiling. Behind him two men with eager, ferret eyes peered over his shoulder at Rupert.



At a word from Cliff they passed to the front, and before master Rupert had got over shaking and trembling at the sight of *him*, whom he took for a ghost, they had his hands in irons.

The father, hearing the fray, and coming in, they secured him also, and marched them both off to prison. They *were* impostors, fugitives from justice, too, for whom search had long been made in vain.

"I thought you were a ghost, Cliff," said Erla, as she clung to him hysterically.

"I might have been," he answered, "if our friends, who have just gone, had had their way. They sent a man after me to try and kill me, but I escaped. I came here with the officers last night; but the old man was away, so we had to wait, and Felix hid us in the clock. The key? oh, no. The lock was rusty and gave way as soon as we touched it."

"And it was you who started the clock?"

He laughed:

"Yes, I ran against the pendulum two or three times in the dark there, and, the first I knew, it was going."

"Didn't I always tell you, Felix," said Erla, turning to the old steward, who stood looking smilingly on, "that Cliff would make the clock go some time?"

They say it has never stopped since. But I don't vouch for the story.

MADAME RHODELLE'S GHOST STORY.

"My servant man, Pierrot," said the old lady, "was hired to me with a little villa that I occupied during a year that I spent in Italy. It was a mouldy old place enough, and he was a quaint old man, who looked as battered and weather-stained as the statues that hid amongst the vines and shrubbery in the garden; but I liked the seclusion of the spot, and I liked Pierrot, too. He was an Italian, but his mother was Swiss, and he was more faithful than Italian servants are in general. He had a peculiarly charming way of waiting, and saw to the comfort of all the guests, at any of the tiny parties I gave, in the most wonderful manner. Above all, he had a soft step, and never slammed a door. I considered him a treasure.

"If I had time, I could tell you a thousand stories about Pierrot; but what you want is to hear about my ghost, so we will come at once to the day when I had invited twelve friends to spend the evening at the villa, and when Pierrot came to me in the morning and asked permission to go to Naples to receive money, which one, who had borrowed of him, was to pay him that day. 'Madame,' he said, 'only for a few hours;' but I listened to the request with horror.

"'Pierrot,' I said, 'I cannot bear to refuse you, but what should I do if you were to be detained; it is a long way to Naples, and you know of my party to-night.'

"'I shall not forget, Madame,' he said. 'I shall return in time to prepare the salad and have all as it should be.'

"'Oh, I hope so, Pierrot,' I said.

"'On my honor, Madame,' said Pierrot—'on my faith, whatever happens I will be here in time.'

"So I let him go. I knew he would return if it were possible. My only doubt was the possibility.

"The day passed on. I took my midday lunch and siesta, and even when I had had my dinner felt no anxiety about Pierrot's return. But as it grew dusk, and still the figure of the old man did not enter at the gate, my heart sank within me.

"Twenty times, at least, did I send to the kitchen to inquire. Twenty times I received the reply, 'Not yet, Madame.' At last, the truth became manifest. My guests were arriving, and Pierrot was not there. My party would be a failure, with the only being who could make a sallad, or properly attend to the rooms, absent from the house. I gave directions as best I could to my other servants, and turned my attention to the duties of hostess. However, I was in despair; so fancy my joy, when, having postponed the act to the latest moment, I rang the bell for refreshments, to see the door open and Pierrot enter as usual, dressed in his old livery, and bearing his great tray. He looked tired and pale. Evidently he had made great exertions to reach home in time, but never did he wait more elegantly. His light feet made no sound upon the carpet, and he scarcely seemed to need words to understand one's wishes. I was delighted. I smiled upon Pierrot, but he was too well-bred to smile back again.

"We had a great deal of music that night, and were quite late. As midnight approached I called for more wine. Pierrot entered almost before I had summoned him. He was paler still and moved more slowly—certainly he was ill; but he gave every guest his glass with his old-time grace, and then stood quietly behind me awaiting further orders. But quiet as he was every eye was turned upon him, even the musician of the moment looked at him as he tuned his guitar. And suddenly, my little cuckoo clock began to strike the hour of twelve. As its notes sounded, Pierrot shot from behind my chair, and went with noiseless steps toward the door. As the twelfth stroke died away he was gone and the door had not opened.

"'He passed through it,' cried one.

"'He sank into the floor,' cried another.

"'Bah! we have all taken too much wine,' said a third.

"As for me, I sat trembling in my chair as the sound of a horse's feet was heard without, and a rider, who had galloped furiously up to the villa, dismounted and struck some heavy blows with his whip upon the door.

"I hastened forward. There stood one of the armed Italian police.

"'Madame Rhodelle?' he said.

"I bowed.

"'I bring bad news,' said he. 'I shall, I fear, greatly agitate Madame. You had a servant, one Pierrot?'

"'I *have* one,' I said. Thinking of the said Pierrot's strange departure from our presence.

"'Pardon,' said the man; 'you had one this morning. He is now no more. To-day, in Naples, he collected a sum of money, rather large for a man of his position to possess. He left the city and went upon his homeward way. He did not go far; a rascal followed him; one who knew of the money. At dusk he crept up behind him, stabbed him in the back, and took his purse.'

"'Poor Pierrot!' I cried. 'I know now why he was so pale. He must be suffering—'

"'No, Madame,' said the man. 'He suffers no more. Since the hour of sunset he has been lying dead in the hospital. Before he died he cried out suddenly: "Tell madame I shall keep my promise." Perhaps Madame understands?'

"I did. At least, I have always thought so. There were thirteen of us together. We all saw Pierrot. We all know how he disappeared. I am as certain as I am of my own existence that it was Pierrot's ghost who returned that night to wait upon us. But if so, it never came again. Pierrot had nothing on his conscience. He had been faithful in the few things that were given to him. He could rest in peace."

Then Madame Rhodelle ceased talking, and fanned herself. No one dared to hint a doubt that the whole story was true, although every one of her hearers doubted it.

SCIENCE.

It is well known that many animals show a dread of thunder. In a communication to *Nature*, Mr. George J. Romanes suggests that this dread is due to a sense of the mysterious. "I am led to think this" he says, "because I once had a setter which never heard thunder till he was eighteen months old, and on then first hearing it, I thought he was about to die of fright, as I have seen other animals do under various circumstances." The sound of distant artillery produced a similar effect upon this dog; but a trainer of much experience assured Mr. Romanes that if he took the dog to the cannons, so that the cause of the thunder-like noise could be perceived, the animal would no longer manifest any fear.

Professor Alexander Agassiz has communicated a note to the *American Journal of Science and Arts* in support of Mr. C. D. Walcott's view that fossil Trilobites, when living, probably swam on their backs. Trilobites are a genus of articulated animals, large numbers of which occur as fossils lying on their backs. Professor Agassiz says that he has for several summers kept young horse-shoe crabs in his jars, and has noticed that besides thus swimming on their backs, they would remain in a similar position for hours, perfectly quiet, on the bottom of the jars where they were kept. "When they cast their skin it invariably keeps the same attitude on the bottom of the jar."

A plan for exhausting sewer gases and burning them at suitable stations outside of cities, instead of permitting them to make their way into dwellings, was mentioned at a recent meeting of the London Society of Civil and Mechanical Engineers. The same association has been considering the adaptability of the electric light to ordinary purposes of illumination. The conclusion reached was, that electricity could be advantageously applied to the illumination of lighthouses, of the heads of mines, and of large factories having abundant motive power at hand; but that the subdivision and distribution of the electric light, as in the case of gas, would be utterly impracticable.

Henry Daniel Ruhmkorf, who died in Paris in December last, at the age of seventy-four, was the inventor of the famous electrical coil which bears his name. He was a native of Hanover, and began his sojourn in France by acting as a porter in the laboratory of Chevalier, who was then a prominent French physicist. Although he received a prize of fifty thousand francs for his invention of the Ruhmkorf coil, at the French exhibition of electrical apparatus, in 1858, he devoted almost all his income to scientific purposes and charity, so that he died poor.

Anthropologists have been much puzzled to account for the origin of the rude pictures which are found sculptured on the rocks in some parts of Switzerland. They have been regarded as the hieroglyphics of an ancient people, by some writers, while others have attributed them to the soldiers of Hannibal. A Frenchman, however, now offers a simple solution of the problem by ascribing these sculptures to shepherds, who engraved them while engaged in the monotonous occupation of tending their flocks.

An edible earth, of which sheep are very fond, occurs in the Mackenzie country of the South Island of New Zealand, where it forms a range of low clay hills. The shepherds think the animals like it on account of the salt it contains, and an analysis lately made in England indicates that their supposition is correct. The sheep which eat this clay are merinoes, and they consume a good deal of it without sustaining any apparent injury.

We recently mentioned the success of M. Cailletet in liquefying nitric oxide, a substance heretofore known only in a gaseous condition. The gases which had not yet been reduced to the liquid form then comprised oxygen, hydrogen and nitrogen. M. Raoul Pictet, of Geneva, has since effected the liquefaction of oxygen and nitrogen, under the combined influence of cold and pressure, and has reduced hydrogen to the condition of an opaque mist.

The Rev. Samuel Haughton recently read a paper before the Royal Society of London on a new method of finding the duration of certain geological periods. This method shows that Asia and Europe must have been formed at least 641,000 years ago, and indicates that the smallest limit which can be assigned to geological time is 11,000,000 of years.

Among some flints, arrow-points, and pre-historic implements from Lower Egypt, recently exhibited before the Anthropological Institute of London, were fragments of horses' teeth. The teeth appear to have been split into long pieces in order to form objects whose use we cannot now determine. They were found near the Nile, sixteen miles south of Cairo.

The Rev. Horace Waller, an English clergyman and geographer, well-known for his interest in African exploration, has received intelligence from Central Africa that Colonel Mason, an officer in the service of the Khedive of Egypt, has been around the Albert Nyanza or Lake, in a steamer, and finds it to be a comparatively small and land-locked body of water.

According to Mr. H. W. Chisholm, the English warden of the standards of weight and measure, platinum is the metal which best fulfills the conditions of permanence requisite in a standard of weight.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

JAMES says: "Although I have had good education, been among gentlemen, taught in a Sabbath school, and belonged to a literary society, yet I have never learned to converse well. It seems as if, when I had anything to say, I couldn't find speech. I cannot give expression to my desires, thoughts, feelings, or sensibilities. I would like to make myself agreeable in society as a companion. I read a great deal, yet, for all, I never have anything appropriate to say in conversation. It seems my faculties are too sluggish: often, when reading, I cannot understand what I am reading about. I try to understand, or analyze it, but it seems as if my mind were weighted, and I could not think. Is there any way by which the faculties might be made more active? It seems as if I were divided from society by it, for no one cares to be in my society, because I am no society at all. How may one rise above these and become an acceptable and pleasing companion? If people sometimes do give me their company, it seems as if it were in condescension. I would give a great deal if I could, by study or otherwise, become acceptable company. I think there is nothing more desirable than to be respected and sought as a companion and friend, to be able to converse well and intelligibly, to be a man among men. It seems, with all my studying and striving, I only become worse. If I study anything, it is soon forgotten. If I hear a sermon, or lecture, when it is ended I cannot remember one thought till the next Sabbath. How can the mind be made retentive, so that it might follow another in a discourse? Or, in reading a book, or article in a paper, be able to give an outline or comprehensive idea of what it has heard or read, and retain it? Sometimes, by questioning a little, talk may be got from me; but I cannot lead in conversation, nor sustain it. Please help me, if you can, by suggesting some course of study, or reading, or anything." We do not believe you are nearly so dull and uninteresting as you represent yourself to be. Your letter is very good. No rule can be laid down for conversation. Most persons thinking on the subject are too ambitious. They wish to talk like books or leading articles. Do not attempt this. Begin with the common themes, and say what you think about them. The greatest bore in life is a talker for talk's sake.

J. D. (Farmer City, Ill.) says: "Among the many that apply to you for information, I herewith propose to become one. The subject I have in view is this: There seems to be quite a diversity of opinions in relation to the real age of this earth on which we dwell; some reckon from a geological stand-point—that it is of far greater antiquity than what the chronology of the Bible would indicate. Please give us your views and opinions on the subject, through the medium of the *Ledger*. Also, another matter, that seems to partake intimately with the above, I would be greatly pleased to hear from you on, viz., the six days alluded to in the first chapter of Genesis, concerning the creation of this earth. I wish your opinion as to whether it means days of twenty-four hours each, or does it allude to indefinite periods of time? I do not know as it would be proper for me to offer any opinions on either of the above subjects, after a solicitation of yours, further than this: that in relation to the length of the six days of the creation, I understand them to be days of twenty-four hours each, because of the expression, 'The evening and the morning was the first day,' etc., which seems to me to be qualifications of days of twenty-four hours each. Am I right?" As to the first of the questions you put, when Geology was yet young, and very rash and heady, it put the Mosaic creation, and the date of man's coming on the earth, very far back. But with increasing knowledge these estimates have been corrected, and the drift of science is toward the Bible chronology. The researches into the glacial action over the surface of Michigan are among the facts looking in this direction. On the second point there is still diversity of opinion, some holding the "day-period," and some the twenty-four-hours day. It is of more consequence, however, that the *order* of events described in the narrative is being corroborated by science. You had better provide yourself with Principal Dawson's work, *Nature and the Bible*.

JENNIE S. says: "I am a widow with one child, a little boy. I am twenty-eight years old. I have been receiving the attention of a gentleman, about my own age, for the last ten months. I have been engaged to be married to him almost six months. He lives about twenty miles from me. At first he came to see me very often, but lately he does not come at all, but writes to me and says he loves me as devotedly as ever, and wants me to keep my promise. During the time that we have been engaged he has not taken me to any place of amusement, or given me a present of any kind, not even an engagement ring, and he is a man of means and has plenty of time to take me out. He has a cousin that he is always praising by telling me how talented and handsome she is, and that his folks are very anxious that he should marry her. I have never seen her, but I have told him very often that he ought to marry her, not me; that his folks would be better suited if he did; but he always says no—he intends to suit himself. I told him I could not marry him any sooner than a year, and he was willing to wait. Now, please give me your advice. Shall I marry him or not? Do you think him in earnest, or is he trying to fool me? Do you think he would make a kind husband?" It does not give us a particularly pleasant idea of the gentleman that he talks in this way of his cousin. Gentlemen do not usually say how highly they are rated in the matrimonial market to the ladies to whom they are engaged. We recommend you to proceed with caution; not to commit yourself too far. The circumstances may account for his not taking you out, but there is enough in them to render a lady reserved and cautious. As to the "probabilities" of his making you a good husband, we cannot calculate them; but we should like you to get not only a man whom you could like, but one to be respected, and who would be good to that little boy.

TYPOGRAPHIA (New York) says: "Although I have only been a reader of your excellent journal for a few months, yet the advice contained in your correspondents' column is so unprejudiced that I come to you for a few answers to the questions below. First of all, allow me to state that I am a young man, anxious to rise in my profession, and if hard work can do anything toward it, I am not afraid of it. I would like to enter the journalistic profession. 1. What do you think of the chances for a compositor like myself with a fair education? 2. What works would you recommend to study for the first year? 3. Can you outline a general system of the different studies to be pursued? 4. How long will it require to fit myself for such a position? Now, Mr. Editor, please answer soon, and to the best of your ability, and, being an editor yourself, your advice will weigh heavily in the balance. You need not publish this letter if you do not wish to." 1. We should have the pleasure of a personal acquaintance in order to augur definitely of your prospects. 2. The various good works on English literature, as Taine's, French's, Greene's books, and as much history, political and civil, as you can manage. 3. No; because much turns on the acquirements you have at present. 4. You say "such a position," but do not define it more accurately than "journalistic." Now, that word covers everything, from the youngest reporter up to the managing editor and proprietor. The elements of success are, fair knowledge of books, unusual knowledge of human nature, common sense, and integrity.

L. C. (Illinois) says: "Having been a constant reader of your paper for many years, I come to you, for the first time, for advice. 1. I am eighteen years of age, have always attended school until this year, when my father, thinking that he could not afford to keep me there longer, called me home. I would have graduated in two more years, and could bear the expense myself; but, thinking that after two years I would come home with my health enfeebled—not being strong—I concluded to come home, rest a year, and then teach. Now, as I do not think that I can stand teaching, though I think that I shall enjoy it, as I am a lover of school, I want to know what you think. I have a good home, but I want to be independent, earning my own living. I am ambitious, and cannot be idle. 2. Am I too young to have gentlemen visitors once a week?" It would be foreign to all our ideas of propriety and even good sense for one who only knows what you say of yourself in the foregoing to give you advice which may conflict with the opinions of your natural guardians, who probably know rather more than you have put into your letter, and who, for aught we may know, may be as wise as any editor. Be busy at home; cultivate your mind by useful reading, and take care of your body by sufficient exercise and sleep and regular habits. Gentlemen visitors once a week are not at all necessary to a young lady's health. If they have to be endured, why, there is no help; but you need not encourage the annoyance.

JAMES DRULLENGER (Campo Seco, Cal.) says: "Please say in the *Ledger*, who was the author of the expression:

"'Westward the march of empire takes its way.'"

The lines are from Bishop Berkley, and the entire stanza, not often quoted, is as follows:

"Westward the course of empire takes its way;
The four first acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day;
Time's noblest offspring is the last."

MRS. S. H. (Mexico, Ind.) says: "I am an old lady of seventy; have but one son, and he is lost to me. His name is Alfred Kane; at the close of the war he was a merchant in New York city—wholesale dry-goods, I think; was not married then; was worth about sixty or seventy thousand dollars; since then have not heard from him. Is about forty-nine years of age. Can you, or any of the many readers of the *Ledger*, give me any information, and oblige an anxious mother?" We have not heard the name in this connection. And, while notices of this nature do not properly come within the scope of these columns, the circumstances are so peculiar that we give your letter, and shall be glad if it brings any tidings of your son.

ROSALIND (Paris, Texas) says: "I have a small matter about which I am very anxious to receive some information. Here it is: Are there three methods of pronunciation in the Latin, the English, the Roman, and the Continental? or two, the English and Continental? In the English method, what is the pronunciation of *o* before two consonants, as in 'Propter,' and before a double consonant, as in 'Noxius?' In the same method, what is the sound of *a* in the Latin word 'Axis,' and *i* before *s* in the dative and ablative endings of the noun? Also, its sound in Liber? Please let us welcome an early reception of what we now seek with thanks." We are not aware of any effort to introduce Roman pronunciation of Latin. The "Continental" is for the most part German. In "propter," the English scholar pronounces the "o" as in the English "prop," and so of "noxius." The "i" in the datives and ablatives as like "i" in "promise," and in "Liber" as in the English word "fibre."

W. M. (New York) says: "Being a constant reader of your valuable paper, I take the liberty of requesting that you will be kind enough, in your next issue, to say (talking of two sisters,) which is correct: '*The Misses* Harrow,' or '*the Miss* Harrows?' I have a dispute with a friend about the matter, and we have agreed to leave the decision to you." "The Misses Harrow" is the formally correct way of speaking and writing; but in free conversation it is quite common to say "the Miss Harrows."

C. F. (Chicago) says: "I have a question to ask, which I hope you will be kind enough to answer in the correspondents' column of the *Ledger*. My mother, who was born in Germany in the year 1815, told us children (there are ten of them) often and often that when she was about thirteen years old, her father received a letter from America, stating therein that there was a very large fortune left to him by a near relative, and he should immediately come over and claim the same. Her father intended to make the trip to America; but in those days, I suppose, men were more afraid to cross the ocean than they are now, and he, being in very good circumstances, put it off from day to day, and not long after the receipt of the news, died. My mother told us often that the fortune must be a large one, as deceased was the owner of many vessels and large tracts of land, this being indicated in the letter received. The letter was lost, and she cannot recollect the place it was sent from. She begged me often to inquire of lawyers what step to take to get information about it, but I always postponed it. Having lately met with misfortune in business, the thought struck me, as she again on New Year's night talked about it, to come to you for your advice. No doubt you can enlighten us, of whom or where we can get information in such a case." In ignorance of the name of the testator, legatee, or heirs, of the State, and of the time, it is impossible for us to give you more definite advice than that you should go to a lawyer, give him these particulars, and inquire his terms for making inquiry for you. Lands are commonly registered in some form, and they could be traced; but we must say we do not expect much from the search at this late day, and on so slender information as you have.

R. (Wayne County) says: "A lady with, perhaps, more than her share of beauty, who has reached the age of forty without a knowledge of the passion of love, has, at last, become a victim to Cupid's darts; and were this all, it were, indeed, well; but, alas! the case is a most complicated affair. The object of her affection is a young man of twenty summers, beautiful as Apollo, wealthy as Midas; the lady knows not whether her love is returned or not. But she is loved by another, a widower of fifty-four, who has five children, and but a moderate income. She has promised to consider his offer, and give him his answer in two weeks. Shall she disregard the cry of her heart? Shall she set aside the instincts of her woman's feelings and accept the man who loves her? Or shall she wait for her love to be returned, and, perhaps, go down life's path alone?" If you are a woman forty years of age, and the cry of your heart is for a boy of twenty, we think you would do well to disregard it entirely. You need not, as the alternative, go "down life's pathway alone." Why not go down with the old widower of fifty-four—as far as you both go? Be thankful that he is not eighty-three!

C. (Cincinnati) says: "As I do not want to make known to my friends my present intentions, I do not want to converse with them on the subject. I am a young lady, twenty-seven years of age, and have always had a desire to go to San Francisco, but never had the means before. Having a married brother there, who is anxious I should come, I am still afraid of not doing as well there as here. What I want to know is this: Can a lady, with a fair education, do as well in San Francisco as in Cincinnati? Are ladies employed as clerks, etc., respected and recognized in good society? Are situations of this kind hard to get, or not? as I would not live without being independent and earning my own living." Of course, no stranger, anywhere, is on equal terms with a person acquainted, in obtaining a situation. But we think the chances for strangers as good in San Francisco as anywhere. Our advice to you, however, is to stay at home.

A. F. says: "A young gentleman, who had been our friend for the last three years, is spending a few months away, and has written, with our permission, several letters, directing them to mamma, which she did not feel at liberty to answer on account of papa's disapproving of a married lady's corresponding with an unmarried gentleman. Papa thinks if the letters must be answered, for politeness' sake, it would be more suitable for me to do so than mamma. I am the daughter of the house, and have just entered society. The letters simply inquired after the family. Please give us your esteemed opinion: To whom should the answering of the letters fall? Would it not be extremely impolite to leave them unanswered?" If the letters simply inquired after the family, any member of the family may properly answer them in four words, to wit: "The family are well."

B. E. writes: "I am in a kind of difficult position of mind. There has been a young man waiting upon me for quite a while. He has given me presents, and will go with no other young lady except myself, although I have tried to get him to. There are plenty that would go with him. He takes me to church whenever I can go, comes to see me twice every week, good weather or bad, and takes me to parties, or any place I express a desire to go. When told by others that they don't think he loves me, he says they think wrong. Do you think any *gentleman* would do so without a good reason? In short, do you think he is in love with me?" His actions, as well as his declarations, as stated by you, certainly indicate that he is inclined to prefer you to others. You ought to manage in some way to take him into your confidence, and see what he would himself say about it.

J. C. MICHELTREE (Edenburgh) says: "Will you please tell me, in your answers to correspondents, the difference between a truth and a fact. Please answer soon, and oblige several readers of your paper." A *fact* is a thing done, whether anybody ever talks of it or not. A truth is the statement of a fact, or of a principle. Colloquially the two words are interchangeable. For example, "two and two are four;" strictly speaking, that is a truth. But many would say, "that is a fact." The sun is many millions of miles away. That is a truth. It is only in a roundabout way we call it a fact, as when we say, "the fact of the sun's distance."

E. L. SIMON (Round Rock, Texas) writes: "Will you be kind enough to state in your next paper whether, if a man be found drunk and brought by a policeman before a police court, he can demand a trial by jury, or has the judge a right to sentence him according to his knowledge?" That depends upon the constitution and laws of the State in which the occurrences take place. The general theory is, that in any matter involving the life or liberty of a citizen, he has a right to a trial by jury.

ALPHONSE (Virginia) says: "If a gentleman sends a note to a young lady, asking her company to church, and she sends the bearer of the note back with the verbal answer, 'Yes,' should he go with her?" He should. A more formal answer might be more appropriate, as long as the invitation was in writing; but inasmuch as she accepts—and that is the main point—it is hardly worth while to cavil at her manner of doing it.

EXCELSIOR (New York) says: "M. and B. have had a dispute about George Washington's ancestors. B. claims they were Swedes, while M. claims they were English. Which is right? Please answer, as I am a constant reader." The Washingtons were English.

M. P. (Salt Lake City) writes: "If a couple are married on Sunday, is it considered legal? I was married on that day, and have heard that it was not considered legal in some States, and so have come to you for information." A marriage ceremony performed on Sunday is legal. You need have no fears on that score.

I. (Grandview, Iowa) asks: "When a young lady has a musical instrument, should she play when her friends come in, without waiting to be asked?" No, she should not volunteer to play, when others are present, without being asked.

G. (Glastonbury) says: "If a man marries my mother's sister, how shall I address him in speaking to him, and speak of him in speaking to others? What relation is he to me?" Call him uncle. He is your uncle by marriage.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*

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